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**THE**  
**EUPHRATES EXPEDITION**  
**VOL. I.**







A PERSONAL NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
EUPHRATES EXPEDITION

BY  
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## PREFACE.



So much has been said about the Euphrates Expedition and the Euphrates Valley Route, that it seems almost presumptuous to say in the present day that no fully detailed account of that Expedition has yet been given to the public.

But such is the case. General Chesney, in his anxiety to do justice to what had been accomplished under his inspiring influence, attempted too much. He embodied what was historical in a great work which embraced all that had preceded the Expedition in the annals of the countries explored, and in which the new facts obtained were buried in the vast mass of collected matter.

This was followed by an abbreviated narrative ; but while doing justice to the part he took in inaugurating and carrying out the Expedition, it left very much to be desired in the matter of details.

The General's work may indeed be considered to be an official narrative of the inauguration of the undertaking—of the support lent to it by His Majesty King William the Fourth and by a Committee of the House

of Commons—of the fitting out of steamers and material—of the opposition presented by a great Northern Power to its prosecution, and of that of the Egyptians, at that time in possession of the country through which the transport had to be effected, and who opposed anything that was countenanced by the Sublime Porte.

The narrative is further preceded by a full record of the gallant officer's explorations in Syria and Palestine, previous to a first descent of the river in an open boat ; hence it happens that nine chapters out of twenty alone are devoted to what can really be called the ' Narrative of the Expedition.'

It is to be hoped that the present work will show the utter inadequacy—however ably and skilfully told—of such a sketch to give a satisfactory idea of the amount of work accomplished and of the new matter obtained, especially in descriptive and comparative geography ; that is to say, the identification of existing places or sites with those known to the ancients or renowned in history.

The Expedition to the Euphrates stands really without a parallel in the history of similar undertakings, alike for the novelty and magnitude of the enterprise, for the scale upon which it was got up, for the difficulties it had to encounter, and for the importance of the results obtained. It would then be a loss to all future times if some attempt were not made to chronicle these facts as far as is possible by a single observer.

The narrative now presented to the public is indeed of a personal character. Attached as I was to the Surveying Party, and carrying out in my zeal for geological and antiquarian research several excursions apart from the proceedings of the Expedition proper, I came in contact with places and scenes of which no mention is made in the official record.

At the onset, for example, I was engaged with the Surveying Party in a reconnaissance of the coast of Syria southwards, and of the Gulf of Issus, with portions of Cilicia, northwards of the Orontes—the mouth of which river constituted the place of disembarkation. Ascents of Mount Casius, of Mount Rhosus, and of Mount Amanus were effected on this occasion, besides a first recognition of the Gates of Cilicia, renowned in history, more especially in the campaigns of Cyrus and of Alexander the Great.

Then again, besides explorations of the lake and plains of Antioch—the seat of the defeat of Queen Zenobia, and of many combats of the crusaders—I made an excursion in company of only a muleteer, to the country of the Ansarians, and to Cœle-Syria, where were many interesting remains of an early Christianity.

I also explored the Upper Euphrates in company with Captain Lynch, upon which occasion we further surveyed portions of Mesopotamia, including the previously undescribed sites of Haran—the Carrhæ of the Romans, and of Serug—the Batnæ of the middle ages, where we found a colossal remnant of Assyrian times,

and were enabled by the juxtaposition of ancient localities, such as that of the second Ur of the Khaldees, and of the patriarchal sites of Haran and Serug, to recognise the fatherland of Abraham after the emigration from Khaldaea.

I made, during the descent of the river Euphrates, and the subsequent ascent of the same river, as also of the rivers Tigris and Karūn—ancient Eulæus—many determinations of ancient sites, alone or in company of others, the details of which have not as yet been given to the public.

I crossed and re-crossed the plain of Babylonia in different directions in order to determine satisfactorily the positioning of ancient sites, the course of its different canals of communication or of irrigation, and the relation these bear to what is recorded of them in olden times.

It was by such reconnaissances that I was enabled to establish the distinction between the Habor of the first Captivity of the Jews, in Mesopotamia, and the Chebar of a second or Babylonian captivity.

The positioning of the mounds of Babylon determined in these explorations, opposed at first by one eminent traveller, have since been adopted as correct by subsequent travellers, including Sir Austin Henry Layard and Messrs. Loftus and Taylor. I was also the first to point out the identity of the Birs Nimrūd with the ancient Bursif or Borsippa—an identity since established by the researches of Sir Henry Rawlinson.

Arrived at Bushire on the Persian Gulf, I made a personal exploration of the renowned passes of the Persian Apennines, visited the ruins of Persepolis, and explored to its furthest recesses the cave of Shapur, with its colossal statue.

The navigation of the ancient Eulæus, the reconnaissance of the territory of the Cha'ab Arabs—ancient Mesene—the examination of the olden site and sugar plantations of Aginis—now Ahwaz—and the subsequent ascent of the Tigris to Ctesiphon, Seleucia, and Baghdad, were all carried out after the departure of General Chesney to India, and do not therefore find a place in his narrative.

I have added to these reconnaissances a few details of the operations subsequently carried on by the Anglo-Indian forces against the Persians, and have given some account of the intrigues of the representative of France, which did so much towards bringing about that brilliant but unnecessary campaign.

I was deputed on the breaking up of the Expedition to explore certain portions of the mountainous regions of Kurdistan in the search for coal, on which occasion I was accompanied by Mr. E. Rassam, afterwards vice-consul at Mosul, and we returned together, after an unsuccessful search, but a journey replete with interest and novelty, across Asia Minor to Constantinople, and thence home.

I also met, alike on the explorations carried out by myself or in the company of others, many adventures which could not be expected to form part of an official

narrative, and which yet may interest the general reader.

I have further devoted much time and attention to the difficult questions which presented themselves in countries celebrated for the part they played in ancient history—to the sites renowned in antiquity—to the marches and countermarches of contending forces—to the lines of commercial communication—and to the rise and fall of successive dynasties and to particular and once populous and prosperous towns and cities.

I have been assisted in what concerns one detail, that of the overthrow of Christianity in Mesopotamia, by an episode in the historical works of El Wakedi which was not available to Gibbon, or even to Ockley, the careful historian of the Saracens, and to whose works it therefore constitutes a hitherto unpublished supplement.

If the first exploration and navigation of the river Euphrates, and the ascents subsequently made, at the time of low water, have shown that the river itself cannot be looked upon as an available line of water-communication with our Indian possessions at all seasons of the year, I should still personally hold that the determination of the friable character of the rock formations that occupy the whole length of the valley of the Euphrates from Mount Taurus to the Persian Gulf (with some very trifling exceptions, as at the Iron Gates and the Pass of Zenobia), present such almost unparalleled facilities for the establishment of a direct railway com-



munication as to be worth any other result obtained by the exploration and survey of the river and of the adjacent countries ; for what in this instance applies to the Euphrates, also applies to the Tigris, and below a certain line of volcanic rocks in Northern Mesopotamia, to the crossing of ‘ the land between the rivers.’

The chief obstacles in an economic point of view that present themselves to such a line of railway are met with in the hard limestones of North Syria, but it has been shown that these could be avoided by a slight detour.

I cannot but hope, then, that a narrative of the details and incidents connected with so important an Expedition may not only be favourably received and perused with interest, but that it may at the same time take its place as a work of reference for the future.

The attention of all enlightened persons is, and always will be, directed towards countries of such deep interest in themselves, and of the utmost importance to a permanent connection with our Empire in the East.

The valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers constituted the cradle of mankind and the seat of once great and prosperous Empires, the history of which is intimately associated with that recorded in Holy Writ ; and they cannot therefore ever be deprived of the interest which attaches itself to them, or of the sympathy felt by most people in their present condition and their future.

Nor can the importance of the countries watered by

these two great rivers and their affluents—the vast amount of rich and fertile country which they comprise, and the opening which these present to enterprise and industry—be for ever overlooked.

They cannot, with the progress of population and civilisation in Europe, be ever left in unproductiveness and desolation under an effete rule. The day must come—by the very nature of things, by evolution in history, by the imperious necessity for expansion in population, in production, and in commerce—when civilisation and prosperity will be restored to these long neglected countries, when one nation or another will resuscitate the splendour of the past, and Assyria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Khaldaea will once more take their place among the great communities of the earth.

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*LIST OF OFFICERS ATTACHED TO THE  
EUPHRATES EXPEDITION.*

COLONEL FRANCIS RAWDON CHESNEY, R.A., in command. Afterwards Major-General. Deceased.

MAJOR J. B. B. ESTCOURT. Afterwards Major-General. Died in camp before Sebastopol.

LIEUTENANT H. F. MURPHY, R.E., astronomer. Died at Bassora.

LIEUTENANT R. COCKBURN, R.A., in command of the Artillery, was drowned at the loss of the 'Tigris.'

CAPTAIN H. B. LYNCH, C.B., K.L.S., in command of the 'Tigris.' Deceased.

COMMANDER R. F. CLEVELAND, R.N., commanded the 'Euphrates.' Deceased.

CAPTAIN E. P. CHARLEWOOD, R.N., second in command on the 'Euphrates.' Now Admiral Charlewood.

CAPTAIN JAMES FITZJAMES, R.N., third in command on the 'Euphrates.' Perished on Sir John Franklin's expedition.

CAPTAIN HENRY EDEN, R.N., second in command on the 'Tigris.'

WILLIAM F. AINSWORTH, surgeon and geologist to the expedition. Surgeon to the 'Euphrates.'

DR. C. F. STAUNTON, R.A., surgeon to the 'Tigris.' Left at the loss of that vessel. Deceased.

A. A. STAUNTON, assistant surgeon to the 'Tigris.' Left at the loss of that vessel, and received a commission in the Royal Artillery as a reward for his services. Deceased.

W. TAYLOUR THOMSON, assistant to Lieutenant Murphy. Left at the loss of the 'Tigris'; was appointed paid Attaché to the Persian Embassy in reward for his services; became Chargé d'Affaires, and died Sir W. Taylour Thomson.

CHRISTIAN A. RASSAM, interpreter to the Expedition. Was in reward for his services appointed British vice-consul at Mosul. Deceased.

A. HECTOR, storekeeper and purser. Was appointed in charge of the postal line through Arabia.





# THE EUPHRATES EXPEDITION.

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## *BOOK I.—THE TRANSPORT.*

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SEA VOYAGE.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1834, I obtained, through the recommendation of Captain Sabine, R.A., afterwards Sir Edward Sabine, the appointment, dated November 26, of surgeon and geologist to the Euphrates Expedition, at that time fitting out at Mr. Laird's at Birkenhead, under the superintendence of Colonel Chesney, the distinguished inaugurator, and the commanding officer as well as the commanding spirit, of the expedition.

As there was still some little time to spare, Captain Sabine added to his many proofs of kindness and friendship, by undertaking to give me instruction in practical points of astronomy, surveying, and carrying out magnetic observations, and I joined him to that effect at Limerick. I had barely time after this to pay a hurried visit to my parents in London, to my brother at Hartford, and to

my relatives in Manchester, ere I had to join at Liverpool, and submit the candidates for the service to surgical examination.

On February 4, 1835, I went on board the barque 'George Canning,' which had been previously laden with the material of two iron steamers, to be put together on the river Euphrates, as well as a host of other necessities, and she sailed on the 11th.

Whilst still engaged taking in stores off Liverpool, a tide-waiter, by some accident or other, fell overboard. The gallant Fitzjames, one of our naval officers, who afterwards perished on the expedition in search of Captain Franklin, never hesitated, but jumped into the Mersey, caught the man by the hair of his head, and held him up until assistance came. The feat was all the more courageous as Fitzjames had all his clothes on, and a spring-tide was setting up the river at rapid speed.

On the 15th we were off the Cove of Cork, and the first magnetic observations were made on the Nymph Bank. The services of a tug were also obtained here to help us out into the Atlantic, but she did not go far. It came on to blow pretty stiffly, so she let go the hawser and took her way back again.

I took observations on the temperature of the sea in our progress across the Atlantic, and was amused, after crossing the Bay of Biscay, to find by a sudden and great rise in the temperature, that we had got into the Gulf Stream.

We had by this time become acquainted with one another. I had a cabin aft with Lieutenant Murphy, R.E., our chief surveyor and astronomer. Fitzjames

was the life of the party—ever on mischief bent—and looking upon me as a landsman, he somehow so attached a pair of boots to a string as to get them into the window, and rouse me from my sleep by a playful bumping on the head.

On passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, being his watch, he also roused us all to see Venus blazing by the side of Calpe. It was, however, a beautiful sight.

We made but a momentary stay at Jebel el Tarik—the Rock of Tarik—but proceeded along the Mediterranean, with the glorious summits of the Sierra Nevada glittering in the sunset to our left.

Becalmed off the island of Alboran, the geological instinct suggested an examination of this rock in the sea. Charlewood volunteered, but the captain of the ‘George Canning’ would not permit us to go alone, so he luckily joined the party. I say luckily, for it came on to blow ere we reached the island, the ‘George Canning’ set sail, and it was only after a very fatiguing pull that we were enabled to join the ship.

We also caught some turtle lying on their backs during the calm, and a few of us ventured to partake of a culinary preparation thereof, which did not add to our comforts next day.

We arrived at Malta on March 12, and the next day Thomson and I were given liberty to explore the island, as well as that of Gozo. The excursion was made on foot, and arriving the first day at Cività Vecchia, we were entertained by an obsequious Italian, who placed a ragout of mutton and tomatoes before us, but when we inquired after beds, politely informed us

that there were only the chairs we were sitting upon at our disposal.

We were even worse off at St. Paul's Bay, where we had to seek refuge in a kind of monastic establishment, and had to sleep on bare boards. It was, however, an inauguration to hardships to which we should get accustomed in the East.

Sir Henry Ponsonby, at that time Governor of Malta, was very kind to us all. He introduced me to Dr. Davy, brother of Sir Humphry, and well known for his scientific acquirements. We also had time for a stroll to Marsa Sirocco, and to visit the ancient Com-manderie with its knights templars mounted and in armour, the Hydrographical Offices, and other curiosities of the place.

We sailed from Malta on the 20th of the same month, accompanied by the 'Columbine,' Captain Henderson, kindly placed at the disposal of the Expedition by Sir Henry Ponsonby. Colonel Chesney and the surveying party, consisting of Murphy, Thomson, and myself, had taken up their quarters on board the 'Columbine,' as it was proposed to land us on the island of Cyprus. Arriving, however, at Larnica on the 30th of the month, we found that the plague was devastating the country, so we had to give up its projected exploration.

On the 3rd of April, the 'Columbine' and 'George Canning' were safely anchored in the magnificent bay of Antioch—Mount Rhosus with the ruins of Seleucia Pieria at its foot on the one side, and the still loftier isolated Mount Casius, its summit clad with snow, on the other, and the opening of Syria—the only really feasible

one along the northern coast of that country in the centre, watered on its southern side by the river Orontes.

The next day—there was no time lost with Colonel Chesney—not a minute if it could be gained—preparations were made for landing the heavy weights and stores by affixing a hawser to the shore not far from the mouth of the Orontes, the transport to be effected by means of rafts hastily constructed for the purpose, and taken by hand to the shore.

This was a laborious work, superintended by the naval officers, and took a long time to carry out. One day Captain Henderson's gig was upset on the bar of the Orontes, and the Captain would probably have been drowned had not Fitzjames thrown him an oar to assist him. The latter could not let go the hawser, or he would have gone to his assistance.

Tents were pitched on the greensward on what had once been the island of Melibœa, noticed by Virgil ('*Æneid*,' v. 251) and Lucretius (ii. 499) and fabled by Oppianus ('*Cyneget.*,' ii. 120), as a nymph beloved by Orontes, who indeed has absorbed her in his embraces, for the island now constitutes part of the mainland.<sup>1</sup>

Temporary erections also gradually rose up, and soon a dépôt arose, to which Colonel Chesney assigned the name of Amelia.

Before all this had been accomplished—the second day of our arrival indeed—a party of officers were sent to explore the Orontes, and ascertain if the heavy weights could be transported up the river to Antioch, some fifteen or sixteen miles from the mouth of the river.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 1.

Unfortunately a huge rocky mountain, crowned by the ruins of a monastery, dedicated, like many others in the land, to the famous St. Simon Stylites—most famous for his eccentricities in the way of penitence—rose upon the southern side of the entrance into Hamath; and the river, coming down from Antioch, had to force its way through a narrow rocky pass, its current being further obstructed by fallen masses of rock.<sup>1</sup>

Great efforts were made to overcome these obstacles; the officers and men took off their coats, the boats were disencumbered of all useless weights, and they were deposited in a cave on the south side of the glen. I undertook to stand guard over these whilst a further attempt was made, a proceeding I have often laughed at since, for the country—under the firm rule of Ibrahim Pasha, at that time himself dwelling in Antioch—was as safe as England itself.

It was all in vain, however. The attempt had to be given up, and the projected carrying out of the transport by river abandoned. As we were, however, so far up the river, the boats were sent back, and we proceeded on foot to explore the valley up to Antioch, where we found Major Estcourt, who had preceded us, bound on business matters with the Armenian who acted as vice-consul at the once celebrated city—now a crumbling town.

Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scenery of the lower valley of the Orontes. The pass of St. Simon has been compared by travellers to anything to be met with in Switzerland for picturesqueness, and the left

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 2.



bank of the river rises up in wooded slopes, which in a civilised country would be dotted with villas. The hills and woods terminate just before reaching the tower and wall clad crest of the hill of Antioch, in the hollow and groves of Daphne, so renowned in antiquity for luxurious sumptuousness as to have led a satirical poet of olden times to aver :

*Si quis cinctus inveniretur apud Daphnen, discinctus rediret.*<sup>1</sup>

Ibrahim Pasha had selected this charming spot for his residence, and the banks of the river, which rose in gentle acclivities on the north side towards the pine-clad Mount Rhosus, were also covered with gardens, cottages, and here and there mulberry plantations. Within the town itself—to reach which from the north an ancient stone bridge has to be crossed—the waters of the river were raised for house supply by means of a wheel of colossal dimensions, whose monotonous, harsh creaking was in aftertimes, when laid up by sickness, a source of great discomfort.

On the 12th and 15th we explored the ruins of the old town of Seleucia Pieria, as also of its ancient harbour, celebrated as the place of embarkation of St. Paul on the occasion when that great and learned apostle was wrecked at the bay which still preserves his name in the island of Malta. What puzzled us most were channels cut on the side of the rock, and which were here carried through the mountain. All we could determine was that they were for the conveyance of water, possibly at seasons when the supply by the

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 3.

tunnels themselves was so small that it would have been dissipated in the transit.<sup>1</sup> We also explored the sepulchral grottoes that decorate the hill-side, and in one of these I found the quills of a porcupine. Half-way between Amelia depôt and Seleucia Pieria (some three or four miles) was a Muhammadan tomb, the roof of which was covered with warty lizards of the gecko tribe. This was the sepulchral chapel of some holy man, and was considered to be a 'ziyaret,' or place of pilgrimage. There were plenty of chamæleons at Seleucia, and a few hares on the coast, but not many.

On the 19th the surveying party were taken in H.M.S. 'Columbine' to Latakiyah, celebrated for its excellent tobacco. After exploring what little remains of ancient Laodicea, and of the aqueduct constructed by Herodes, we kept along the coast to Casius, of which we effected an ascent by the eastern wooded slopes. In the midst of these woods we found the ruins of what had been a handsome little basilica.<sup>2</sup> The presence of such on the slopes of Casius is not to be wondered at when we consider the favour with which this mountain was viewed by antiquity, and the many traditions attached to it of sacrifices made on its summit by Hadrian—of Julian making the ascent to see the sun rise—a phenomenon commented upon by Pliny and by Ammianus Marcellinus.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> This basilica was probably erected on the site of the pagan temple described by Sanchoniatho (Cory's *Ancient Fragments*, p. 11), as having been consecrated to Cronus or Ham, on Mount Casius, by the descendants of the Dioscuri. It is also noticed by Strabo (xvi. 750) and by Ammianus Marcellinus (xxii. 14), who notices a festival in honour of Zeus as being held here in the month of August.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix No. 5.

I was first at the top of the mountain, a little out of breath and very thirsty. But I had a pannikin with me, and picking some sticks at the foot of the snow line, soon got up a fire and melted the snow, but it was labour thrown away, for the water was not palatable.

We descended after bivouacking for the night by the north side of the mountain, by glens and ravines beautified by a varied vegetation, amidst which, as at Daphne, were laurels and sweet-scented box. In a marshy spot, not far from the shore and the mouth of Orontes, we were surprised to find a pretty grotto with a spring of delicious water. This was manifestly the spring mentioned by Strabo as 'Nymphæum with a grotto,' and which he describes as beyond the mouth of Orontes on the way to Casius.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE GULF OF ISSUS.

THERE were two or three huts situated at a bend of the river immediately above Amelia depôt, which constituted a kind of harbour for the small vessels that traded along the coast. At one or both of these they traded in arrack—a coarse spirit distilled from rice—and much favoured by the Greek sailors. Unfortunately some of our men found it—bad as it was—better than no extra spirits at all.

A native boat was engaged at this little place to take the surveying party to the Gulf of Issus or Alexandretta. We were accompanied by Sym—a veteran sergeant of engineers who had served under Lieutenant Murphy in the Ordnance Survey of Ireland—and Laurie, a fine specimen of the British tar. The two did not agree well together. Sergeant Sym was given to occasional grumbling, and I overheard Laurie chaffing him one day, ‘Ah, you have been accustomed to a feather-bed, and you can’t bear sleeping hard now.’

Our first point, after doubling Ras el Khanzir, or the Boar’s Head, was Arsūs—a poor village, but once, under the name of Rhosus, a place of some importance, for there were the remains of an ancient aqueduct, built upon

arches of which only portions were standing, but which extended thence to Mount Rhosus, a distance of two or three miles.<sup>1</sup>

An amusing incident occurred upon our ascent, made from this place to the culminating point of the range (5,550 feet).<sup>2</sup> Our way lay through a dense forest of pines, till we reached a spot still some little distance from the peak itself, where there was a spring and an open glade. This was selected as the site of our bivouac. The tent was pitched. Sergeant Sym was left in charge, and Murphy, Thomson, myself, and Laurie proceeded to the summit, carrying the theodolite for a round of levels.

We were also accompanied by a native—a fine young fellow, who had followed us out of pure curiosity. No sooner were the labours of the day concluded and the instruments packed up, than our young volunteer seized upon the theodolite box, and hoisting it on his shoulder, proceeded at a rapid pace to descend to the spot selected for our bivouac. Murphy was in dismay—‘the theodolite would be ruined,’ he exclaimed—so I hurried after the culprit, to endeavour to prevent mischief, but he was far too light of foot, and I did not join him until I had reached the tent.

<sup>1</sup> We also found here many fragments of walls, arches, and some remains of a temple with Corinthian columns. According to Plutarch, Demetrius repaired to this place from Seleucia Pieria, and in the middle ages it sent its mitred representatives to the Synods of the East. Eusebius, it is true, only notices it as a parish, but Socrates (iii. 25) mentions Antipatrum as Bishop of Rhosus, and it is also mentioned as the episcopacy of Rhosopolis in the Acts of the Synod.

<sup>2</sup> The Jebel el Sair of Abulfeda. *Tab. Syriæ*, p. 165.

Sergeant Sym had in the meantime prepared a goodly mess of meat and beans flavoured with onions, and after a long day's fast I waited rather impatiently for the rest of the party. But time passed on, and no one appeared. At length I got alarmed, and Sym and I took it by turns to fire guns in case they had got astray in the woods.

But neither gun nor voice was heard in response, and darkness overtaking us, Sym, myself, and the native sat down to a rather disconsolate supper.

We had no alternative the next morning but to descend to Arsūs as best we could, the kindly native helping us to carry the impedimenta, which included tent, cooking utensils, instruments, &c.

Great was our relief, however, in finding Murphy, Thomson, and Laurie safe in the village. They had lost their way, and had gained the village at nightfall as best they could. Thomson's trousers were torn to pieces by the thorns, and he told me he had to get to the boat by the back of the houses.

Sailing along the coast from Arsūs to Alexandretta, I saw in the jungle for the first time, the Francolin—the beautiful pheasant of Western Asia, of darker plumage than our own, and with a white ring round the neck of the male bird.

Alexandretta, said by a traveller of the thirteenth century, Willebrand of Oldenburg, in his '*Itin. Terr. Sanct.*,' p. 135, to have been founded by Alexander for his horse, Bucephalus, or '*Iskendrun*' as it is called by the natives, is situated at the bottom of the Gulf of Issus, where the plain is at its widest, in the southern portion

of Amanus and Rhosus, and between which mountain chains lies the pass of Baylan, at what may be termed their division.

Alexandretta was, according to Rochette, in his '*Hist. des Colonies Grecques*,' t. iv. p. 136, fortified by the kings of Armenia. If so, the fortifications have disappeared. The allusion may be to the castle of Marketz. At a short distance in the interior is a polygonal fort said to have been constructed by Godefroy de Bouillon, and near to it an abundant spring commonly known as Jacob's, besides other fragments of ruin.

In an old map which I examined in the Armenian Library at Venice, Godefroy de Bouillon's castle is marked as close to the shore, from which it is now nearly a mile distant, so there is every reason to believe that it stood upon the site of ancient Myriandrus, afterwards Alexandria ad Issum.

At Alexandretta, where we stayed for two days, we employed our leisure time in trying to set to rights some of the tombs of our countrymen; more especially that of Mr. Olphert, who was killed at Ayas at the time of Sir Francis Beaufort's survey of the coast, and which time, and the sacrilegious hands of infidels—to retort their own expletive upon themselves—had done their best to destroy.

The ruins of the old factory of the Levantine merchants still exist, and attached to it there is a chapel whose consecrated yard is full of the graves of European victims to the pernicious climate of the place.

At a very short distance north of Alexandretta, a

spur of Amanus descends to the shore, leaving only a rocky narrow passage between the hills and the sea.

At this point stands a ruined arched gateway, known to the Turks as Sakal Tùtàn, or the 'Beard Catcher,' and to sailors as 'Jonas's Pillars.'

Immediately beyond this marble gateway the plain widens a little, and half a mile beyond are two stone walls, which cross the plain from the mountains to the sea, constituting a double line of defence.

I am not going to enter here into details regarding these two lines of defence, but the manner in which they prove the accuracy of the historians of two remarkable campaigns in ancient times—that of Cyrus in his attempt to recover the crown of Babylon, as narrated by Xenophon, and that of Alexander the Great, when assailed in his rear by Darius, as narrated by Quintus Curtius—is to those who are interested in such subjects very interesting indeed.<sup>1</sup>

Between the two ancient lines of defence stands a mediæval castle, now called Marketz, situated on a hill some 300 feet in elevation. This castle was known as Nigrinum in mediæval times, or as Willebrand had it, *Castellum regis nigrum*, of which the Armenians made Neghertz, and the Turks Merkes or Marketz. This castle belonged to the kings of Armenia, and superseded the old gates in the defence of the pass known in the thirteenth century as the Passus Portellæ, or Portella. Between the inner and outer defences, and at the foot of the castle, flows a rivulet known

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. viii. p. 185 et seq.



as the Kersus, but by Pliny called Andricus in reference to crocodiles, and crocodile or fecundity worship. This rivulet overflows in the hollow between the lines of defence, giving birth to a lakelet and marsh.

The way in which the Kersus of Xenophon came to be called Andricus by Pliny is curious. There were a Mons Crocodilus, and a Flumen Crocodilus, in the Amanus. If there were ever crocodiles in so small a river appears very doubtful, but it is not impossible. This river was called Kersus by Xenophon and Kersias by Ptolemy, and the able commentators of Pancoucke's Pliny suggest an identity between the Syriac Kersus and the Egyptian Kampsa or Kampses, the name of the crocodile of Egypt. Now the word Kersus refers to the ancient crocodile worship and is met with in the Axio-Kersus of the Samo-Thracian mysteries, explained by Zoega and Munter as the great fecundator or fecundatrix, and was thus expressed by Pliny as the Andricus, using the word in the sense of 'man-begetting.'<sup>1</sup>

It is rather curious that the Canon of Oldenburg—Willebrand—describes Jonas's Pillars as constructed of white marble, whilst a later traveller, Belon, says the ancient archway was constructed of bricks strongly cemented together. I found the crumbling walls to be built of white and black marble, 13 feet 6 inches in length, 3 feet thick, and 19 feet high. The width between was only 20 feet, yet Procopius ('Ædif.,' v. 5) tells us that Justinian had made the road practicable for chariots. The blocks used in the construction were

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 6.

from 2 to 3 feet in length, 1 foot 10 inches in depth, and 18 inches in width.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately Lieutenant Murphy selected the interval between the inner and outer walls of defence as the base for a trigonometrical survey of the gulf, so we had to carry the chain through the marsh, and the consequence was that we all three, Murphy, Thomson, and myself, caught the malarious fever for which Alexandretta has so bad a repute. The base might just as well, and better, have been measured off on the level and more elevated ground near the ancient castle of Bayas—a castle called Canamella by Willebrand, and which Victor Langlois ('Voyage dans la Cilicie,' p. 472), confounded with the Sakal Tûtân of the 'Mecca Itinerary.'

The plain begins to widen immediately beyond the gates, and here, and between the gates and Bayas, the Baïæ or 'baths' of the Romans—Pocock, Callier in vol. v. of the 'Bulletin de la Société de Géographie,' and in our own times Sir Charles Wilson—would place the field of battle of Issus, the river of Bayas being the Pinarus of the historians of the campaign. Alexander having got beyond the gates, whilst Darius had got in his rear by crossing the Amanus at the now well-known pass north of the site of Issus. Arrian relates that Darius having crossed the mountain by the pass called the Amanian Gates, marched upon Issus, and thus placed himself in

<sup>1</sup> There is a further and rather interesting question connected with these ruins which is not alluded to in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*. It is whether it was not originally erected as a triumphal arch in commemoration of the victory on the plain of the Pinarus. If so, it would also represent the bomitæ or altars of Alexander, noticed by Pliny as being situate between Amanus and Rhosus.

the rear of Alexander, who was ignorant of his movements. Next day he (Darius) advanced to the Pinarus. Alexander on his side having encamped on the plain of Alexandretta or Myriandrus, after sending a galley to reconnoitre, re-occupied the gates, and descended thence into the plain of Bayas. 'With the dawn,' continues Arrian, 'Alexander descended from the gates along the road, and as long as the pass was narrow he led his army in columns; but as the defile expanded, he regularly formed his column into line by bringing up his heavy-armed troops successively to occupy the vacant space between the main column and the mountains on the right and the sea on the left.'

It only remains then to decide whether Darius made more than one day's march from Issus to the Pinarus, or Alexander made one day's march from the gates before the hostile forces met. The latter was possible, the first scarcely so. Laying aside other questions associated with distances, the details of which are given in the discussion as before published, the probabilities are most in favour of the Pinarus being represented by the Deli Chaye, at the northern end of the plain, than by the Bayas Sū—a most insignificant stream nearer to its southern end, as advocated by the before mentioned authorities—or with the utmost concession of possible distance—between the first and second mentioned rivers.

The town of Bayas is very small, but a model of Turkish architecture.<sup>1</sup> It consists of a single street which at once constituted the thoroughfare and the

<sup>1</sup> It was founded by Sakuli Muhammad Pasha, also called Ibrahim Khan-Zadeh, a wüzir of Sultan Sulaiman.

bazaar. At the southern end was the Serai, Khan, and Hammam or baths, all handsome structures in their way. By such a disposition of the place, the governor, one Kutchuk Ali, or the 'Little Ali,' was enabled for a long time to levy contributions upon travellers with impunity, as they had perforce to go through his town. This was in the latter end of last century, for Kutchuk Ali died in 1807, and was succeeded by his son Mustik Bey, who succumbed to the Porte; after which the town was abandoned, and the Aga lived in a villa prettily situated nearer to the mountains.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst engaged in exploring the town, we happened to enter the khan, still used occasionally by horses and cattle, and became at once covered with fleas. So fearful was the invasion that we had forthwith to repair to the seaside, take off our clothes, and leave the sun to drive away the insects whilst we bathed in the limpid waters before us.

We sailed hence across the gulf to the opposite shore, and endeavoured, to the great horror of our old skipper, to effect a landing, but the waters of the gulf are so shallow in its upper part that we did not succeed, so we were fain to sail along until we reached Ayas—the ancient Agæ—a place which obtained an infamous repute by its fanatic and lawless inhabitants having fired upon a boat at the time of Sir Francis Beaufort's survey of the coast, killing a midshipman, and severely wounding Sir Francis himself.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lares and Penates, or the Governors of Cilicia*, by William Burckhardt Barker.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of this sad occurrence, which ought to have been resented at the time, see Beaufort's *Karamania*, p. 302 *et seq.*

The name *Ægæ* being common to other places in Eubœa, Macedonia, and Thrace, gives to this site an undoubted Hellenic origin—‘*et externa resonant navalibus Ægæ,*’ says Lucanus (iii. 227), and it became a free port in the time of the Romans.

The bay of Ayas is by mistake marked on many maps as east, instead of west of the castle.

In former times the Pyramus had its outlet at Kara Tash, and the mud-bearing and alluvial depositing character of the waters was noticed by the ancients, and, according to Strabo, who was a resident of Tarsus, were celebrated in their poetical oracles, probably alluding to those of Amphilocheus of Mallus.

Time is, when posterity shall see great Pyramus reach,  
With its soil-engendering waters, Cyprus’ sacred beach.

By reaching this place, we were enabled to join our survey with the furthestmost point attained by Captain Beaufort, and the inhabitants having been reduced to order a long time previously, we were enabled to explore the old fortified town, so renowned in antiquity.

Hence we sailed to the sandy promontory noticed by Beaufort near the mouth of the Pyramus, and whilst engaged in a round of observations, great turtles came quietly up upon the shore. Our next station was Kara Tash, or ‘Black Rock,’ a little port close by the sites of Mallus and Megarsus—frequented by coasting-boats, and the Aga of which, whilst entertaining us, after the fashion of the country, with coffee and chibuks (we had been so hard up for provisions that we had had latterly

to live upon a bag of dates, which luckily for us the old Rais had in his cabin), made the remark, 'Well, if our people kill these Frangi, they will some day come and kill us.' We did not understand the reference at first, but afterwards found that one of our men had been killed in a drunken brawl in the huts before described as frequented by boatmen, a little above the encampment on the Orontes.

By this time the intermittent fever caught at the gates of Cilicia had fully developed itself, and we were so ill that it was decided to cross the gulf in as direct a line as we could sail to Alexandretta, and where by the kindness of an English skipper we slept on board of a merchantman in the offing, instead of on the malarious coast. The waters were clean and limpid, and I was much amused in watching the shoals of mullet playing in the depths below. How many good things there are in this world of which no use is made!

The next day, having procured horses with the aid of M. Martinelli, vice-consul at Alexandretta, we proceeded by Godefroy de Bouillon's castle to Baylan, a town situated on the crest of the pass between Amanus and Rhosus.

It is situated in a gorge on the north side of a ravine, at an elevation of 1,580 feet above the sea, and is approached in part by an ancient causeway. There are some houses on the southern side of the gorge (not the pass, which is very wide) and these are connected by a bridge. The mosque or masjid of Baylan was, according to the Mecca Itinerary, built by Sultan Selim, and the khan by Sultan Sulaiman.

Baylan was the Pinara of Pliny and Ptolemy, a name corrupted by Cicero, who says it stood above the Altars of Alexander, into Erana. In the Jerusalem Itinerary it is designated as Pictanus.

We deviated from the high road at this pass, to enter into Amanus and make an ascent of what appeared to be the culminating point in the range, at its southern end, but we were not fortunate in the excursion.

After a long and fatiguing journey, we were enabled to pitch our tent in a lofty vale near the foot of the last point in the mountain, and all of us being ill, Sergeant Sym was deputed to the summit, some hundred feet above us, to make a round of observations.

At night it came on to rain and blow, and the wind attained such strength that at last it carried away our tent bodily, leaving us the rest of the night exposed to the pitiless storm.

This place, situated at an elevation of 4,068 feet, the peak above rising to an altitude of 5,337 feet, was known to the natives as Kurtlu, or the 'Place of Wolves,' and we had occasion to test the accuracy of the appellation, for we had picketed a sheep which we had brought all the way from Karatash to the tent door, but when this was blown over, the wolves made an easy meal of it.

On our way down we visited a Saracenic castle called Baylan Bustandeh, erected, according to the Mecca Itinerary, by the Khalif Vasik, in one of the rooms of which was a coffin, whilst bows and arrows, relics of the middle ages, were scattered about. Beyond this we came to a castle known as that of Ibn Ali Daud—also called Pagras Kalahsi—with a khan called Karamut

and fragments of ruin about. This appears to be the site of the Pagraë of Strabo, Pagras of the Theodosian Tables, and Pangrios of the Jerusalem Itinerary.

Arrived at the foot of the pass, and on our way, we had some splendid views of the lake of Antioch and of Sheikh Barakat, or Mount St. Simon, in the distance. We passed the night at a fountain shaded as usual by a plane tree. The night's exposure had not, however, improved our health. I suffered so much on the way to Antioch the next day that I could have thrown myself off my horse, and Thomson actually sat down at the foot of a tree, and the greatest persuasion had to be used to get him to remount. As to poor Sergeant Sym, he never recovered the exposure, but died some time afterwards at Antioch.

Arrived at length at the latter delightful place, the vice-consul provided us with a home in a recently built, but unfurnished house, where we however soon made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and the place afterwards became a kind of hospital during the long period of time that the transport of the material for the navigation of the great river was being carried out, at least in its incipient portion.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE BATTLE-FIELD OF IMMA.

WHEN I began to recover from my illness, I made excursions to and from Amelia dépôt. Sometimes on these excursions the shivering fit would come on me, and I had to get off my horse and pasture it on the greensward—the faithful animal browsing quietly by my side. These fits used to be so regular in time, that I one day, after taking quinine in vain, thought I would try the effects of a Turkish bath. I got through the ordeal very fairly till I was taken back to the hot-room, when—I believe the only time in my life—I fainted away. I was removed to a couch in the outer room, and carefully attended to. But what was my surprise, on recovering my senses, to find the room filled with a motley group of women and children, with pots and pans, as if they seemed to spend a part of the day at the Hammam. I was, however, smuggled out of the place by the kindly old Turk who had charge of it without any scandal.

Whilst in Antioch, several ash-coloured vultures (*Vultur percnopterus* of Temminck), the scavengers of the place, came to our court-yard. I tried to domesticate one of them, but found that it was so covered with vermin that I lost all regard for it. A small owl, that

used to sit sedately and demurely all day long upon the tombstones of a cemetery on the other side of the river—undisturbed by the natives, who held the bird in superstitious reverence—also attracted my attention. The Rev. Canon Tristram thinks that he met with the Athenian bird in caves on the hill side of the coast, but I am much more inclined to believe that this is the real and original representative of the bird of Minerva.

A ridiculous adventure also befell Thomson and myself at the same epoch. We had gone out on a stroll to a gap which opened in the hills above the charming fountain of Zoiba, and the Beit al moi—as Daphne is now called—and entering into the gap, climbed the slopes of a glen that abutted on the left hand in search of fossils. We found plenty, and were so interested in our researches that sunset overtook us, and we were made aware of the fact by sundry uncouth noises that emanated from below. Looking round, we soon made out numbers of those wretched little quadrupeds that make night hideous with their howls, which at times resemble the cry of a child in distress—the inevitable jackal. Some crept in and out among the great rocks that constituted the debris at the foot of the cliffs, others curved their backs defiantly, like cats, at us.

We thought it best, under the circumstances, to give up our researches and adjourn to the entrance of the glen, where there was a roadway. We had scarcely, however, reached this, than the jackals assembled in a pack, as if in pursuit of us. We had no arms—neither stick nor stone—nothing but a mineralogical hammer, and we stood at bay by the road side. Strange to say,

however, the animals rushed past us—howling and yelling—but not attempting to attack us.

We were invalided at Antioch for nearly a month, the survey of the Gulf of Issus having extended from April 29 to May 25. But by June 1 we were able to start on a survey of that portion of the route of transport which was comprised between Antioch and Azass, at the head of the plain of Antioch.

We made our first acquaintance on this occasion with the Iron Bridge carried over the Orontes, where it changes its course from south to north, to east to west. This bridge, known as Pontisfer to the crusaders, is still called Jisr Hadid, signifying the same thing. This must, indeed, have been from the necessity of circumstances the site of a bridge from the most remote times. It is designated in the 'Tables' as Gephyra, or 'the bridge' *par excellence*, and it appears to be also the bridge which was repaired by the Persian satrap Orontes, who gave his name—since hellenicised from Erwend—to the river. According to Strabo, it was before called after the giant Typhon.

When Baldwin, then king of Jerusalem, repaired to Antioch, to be present at the celebration of the nuptials of Manuel Comnenus with Mary, the daughter of the deceased Raymond, Prince of Antioch, he is related to have fortified the castle of Pontisfer upon the river Orontes. On the first advance of the crusaders from Maresia (now Marash), Robert Earl of Flanders was despatched with a thousand men-at-arms to give summons to Artasia, as Azass was then called, and the stronghold having been obtained possession of through

a revolt of its Christian inhabitants, the army marched forwards to Antioch ; but they are described as having been encountered by the Turks at the same fortified bridge on the Orontes, and Robert Duke of Normandy had to sustain a severe conflict, until the main body coming up, they forced the enemy to give way, and the crusaders, passing the river, encamped with their army before ‘ the famous citie of Antioch,’ on October 21, 1097.

In the month of February of the next year, the Saracens advanced in great force to the relief of the besieged city, and the crusaders leaving the footmen before the walls, went forth in six parties of well-armed horse, under their separate leaders, and defeated the Paynims.

It was upon this occasion that Robert Curthose smote a Saracen through the skull, teeth, and neck down to the shoulder ; in which feat he was only outdone by Duke Godefroy, who clave one of the enemy down so that one half fell off, while the other half remained in the saddle !

The Saracens did not fail, however, to return soon to another charge, on which occasion they were even still more signally defeated than before, and being driven back to the ‘ bridge,’ many were drowned in the Orontes. The old chronicler, Robert of Gloucester, makes reference to this incident when he says :

And, through the grace of Jesus Christ, the Paynims they overcome,  
And slew to ground, here and there, and the other flew anon,  
So that a narrow brig there advent many one.

We bivouacked for the night at this bridge, which attained so much celebrity in the time of the crusades, and advanced thence upon the great plain of Imma or Umk, even still more celebrated in the annals of history.

The soil near the bridge is fertile alluvium, and Ibrahim Pasha had an especial garden here, but beyond, it was marshy and many pretty egrets were wading about. Travelling onwards we came to the rivulet of Im, Em, or Um-goli, where the road divided into two branches, one of which led over the hills to Aleppo, the other to the valley of the Afrin, and by Jindariz to Azass and Bir on the Euphrates. This latter was the line of transport.

A large mound of debris, like all others in this region well worthy of archæological exploration, stood upon a platform of rock at the entrance of the hills, and there were ruins of dwelling-houses and other buildings around.

This was the site of Imma, a city in the district of Antioch, and written Emma in the Theodosian Tables. It can be easily understood then how the name has been corrupted from Im to Em (a pronunciation still in use), and then to Um, or Umk—the name given by the Turcomans to the great plain of the lake of Antioch.

Imma itself is now more generally called Hir Im. Ptolemy notices the place correctly in connection with Gephyra, 'the bridge,' and Gindarus. There were also remains of a bridge and of dwelling-houses on the Emgoli Sū itself, and a few miles further off the ruins of a large Christian village, with the fragments of two

churches. We bivouacked a little beyond this latter site at a mill-stream.

As we sat in the rich sunset, with the vast plain before us sweeping away into marsh and morass, and relieved beyond by the blue expanse of the lake, a feeling of melancholy interest came over us to think that it was on this very plain that the short-lived power and prosperity of the Palmyrenes was crushed by the Roman legions.

An Arabian dynasty was destined never to be but the wonder of a day, and Zenobia herself, a name now traditionally handed over to poetry and painting, and who, though an Asiatic queen, possessed at once Grecian refinement and Roman hardihood, was destined to succumb before the warlike skill and fortune of the Pannonian soldier, and to become thenceforth a Roman citizen.

True that the indomitable Zabdas bore down the legions by the pressure of his cavalry, and for a time threw disorder into Aurelian's ranks, but it could not avert a fatal result. The heavy-armed Palmyrean horse were led into the marshy grounds, thousands were inextricably involved in a deep morass, the light-armed Romans formed around them, and rushing upon the scattered and broken forces made horrid slaughter, and brought about a disaster which a well-conducted retreat along the vale of Cœle-Syria to Emesa, and another hard-fought battle at the Temple of the Sun, was unable to repair.

Zozimus and some other historians suppose this battle to have taken place nearer to Antioch, and

Vopiscus identifies the field of battle with Daphne—an utterly impossible locality—but we have the distinct authority of Sextus Rufus, supported by Syncellus, Jornandes, and a host of others, that the engagement took place before Imma, a country which alone will meet the requirements of the details transmitted to us.

Had the polished author of the 'Letters from Palmyra,' who so effectively sustains the deep interest felt by all in the fate of the city of the desert, and of its gifted queen, been well versed in the localities of the events he describes, how much it would have added to his otherwise highly coloured descriptions! Nature in this case, as in many others, surpasses imagination.

The vast extent of plain and marsh in front of Imma, the deep lake shadowing forth the outline of the lofty wood-clad Amanus and Rhosus, and the clear sharp horizon, broken by the rocks and turreted walls of the hill of Antioch, present a picture far more picturesque in its details, and far more comprehensive and striking in the aggregate, than the play of poetry and feeling combined has been able to suggest.

The vast expanse before us derived an interest from its very immensity. Nothing disturbed the stillness of the landscape; the only indications of life were distant flights of birds, chiefly pelicans, whilst scarlet flamingoes and lily-white crested herons stalked in the distance. There were occasional flocks of sheep, and some goats like little dots on the far off hill sides, and here and there a straggling herd of camels or cattle, stretching like an army over the tawny waste, and attended by a herdsman with long tasselled lance tapering up into

the air; while beyond all and nearer to the lake, the broken line of Achmet Bey's encampment of Turcomans, with its dark chequered tents, was faintly seen on the verge of the horizon.

The next day (June 4) we continued our route across the plain till we gained a gentle ascent, which brought us to the village of Jindariz, containing about forty cottages, and characterised by a lofty tell or mound, all that remains of the castle, once noted as the acropolis or arx of all Cyrrhestica. Strabo, however, speaks disparagingly of ancient Gindarus, as 'a fit receptacle for thieves.'

These tells or mounds of debris are generally characteristic of an ancient site throughout Western Asia. They were called by the ancients Komata, and Strabo describes Tyana and Zela as built on such mounds. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus use the same word. But 'For thou hast made of a city a heap' (Isaiah xxv. 2), is rendered in the Greek version by *eis Koma*. Xenophon uses the term *geologos*—'a mound or hill of earth.' They are called by the Arabs, tells, by the Turks, teppehs, and by the Turcomans, u'yuks. They vary in character, being some partly of rock, at others wholly of debris, and they also vary in magnitude and elevation—the latter from 30 to over 100 feet.

It was from mounds like these that Layard obtained all his wondrous relics of Assyrian art, and Loftus his Chaldæan antiquities. It is to be regretted that those of North Syria have never been explored. There is one to almost every village, and in some instances, as at Ak Dayarīn, the mound is surrounded by



Cyclopean walls formed of huge irregular masses of basalt piled one upon another.<sup>1</sup>

Continuing our journey north, we forded the river Afrin, ancient Arceuthus, where it was about 150 paces in width, and at a point a little below which were the ruins of a castle called Basul Kalahsi. Commanding as it did the pass of the river, it appears to correspond to the Heraclæa of Cyrrhestica of antiquity, and which is described by Strabo (p. 751) as being close to Gindarus.

The same author also elsewhere (p. 517) describes the temple of the Minerva of the Cyrrhistides as being at a distance of twenty stadia, or two geographical miles, from the same spot, and at the distance indicated we found the remains of ecclesiastical edifices, showing what was not uncommonly the case with the Romans and with Christians as well as Muhammadans, the tradition and sanctity of a spot were perpetuated by new forms of religion.

The valley of the Afrin is skirted by hilly ranges on both sides, that to the east constitutes the limestone ridge which stretches from the head of the Afrin to the upper valley of the Orontes. It is known by different names—at this point, and eastward of the plain of Antioch, as the Em-goli Tagh, that is, the mountain of the lake of Imma or of Antioch.

The culminating point of the range is known to the Arabs as Sheikh Barakat, but the Christians call it Mount St. Simon, and tradition points to it as the place where the Christian fakir elected to sit upon a pillar.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 7.

The mountain is indeed dotted with the ruins of an early, a persecuted, and on this mountain ridge, an extinct Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

The exceeding hardness of the limestone of this ridge would present a formidable obstacle to a projected railway eastwards, but it might be avoided by carrying the line northwards to Azaz, or southwards to Kalah al Mudik, ancient Apamæa.

Mount St. Simon was known to Strabo as Trapesus, appropriately so called from its shape, at the foot of which, while Mark Antony was indulging in that inglorious passion which earned for him the severe Philippic—

*Interque signa turpe militaria  
Sol adspicit conopium,*

Ventidius repaired the losses sustained by the quæstor Saxa, by defeating the Parthian general Pharnapates; and it was the year after this that the same able legate delivered, on the same spot, that engagement with the Parthians in which Pacorus was slain—a disaster from which his royal father never recovered. For many days he refused to take food, and did not utter a word; and when at length he spoke, he did nothing but call, as David did for Absalom, upon the name of his beloved son Pacorus.

What a sequel to the triumphs of fifteen years before, and to the similar melancholy fate of Crassus and his son!

. . . Miserando funere Crassus  
Assyrias Latio maculavit sanguine Carras.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Lucanus, i. 104.

The road is carried from the valley of the Afrin, through rocky vales and a broken country, up to the more level districts and uplands of North Syria, and which, from this point to the Euphrates, have a mean elevation of 1,500 feet above the level of the sea. The village of Azaz stands at the head of this ascent, and on the borders of the uplands. It is divided into three different portions, each containing about twenty-five houses, and grouped around a circular mound—partly of rock, but mainly of debris—and hence of more than ordinary magnitude and height, being 250 yards in circumference at the base and ninety at the top, and having an altitude of 120 feet.

Under the name of Arsace, this ancient stronghold played a part in the rebellion of Avidius Cassius against Mark Antony, and it was by Pliny placed in the Tetrarchy called Mammisea. Ptolemy calls it Ariseria, but it was under the various names of Artasia and Arthusia (all from the same derivative Ar or Arx—a citadel), that it came most into notice in the time of the crusades.

The Christian inhabitants of the place rose, as we have seen, at the approach of Robert Earl of Flanders, upon the occasion of the first crusade against the Turks, and slaying the greater portion of them, received the crusaders into the place. It became after this a site of much importance, for, by means of a station at the Iron Bridge, another here, a third at Tell Bashir, and a fourth at Birtha (Bir or Birjik), the communication was kept open between the Princes of Antioch and the Counts of Edessa. Defended by the Latins, the same castle repelled

several attacks made upon it by the Sultan of Aleppo ; and it was one of the strongholds which held out last against the victorious troops of the Kurd Saleh-ed-din—the Saladin of history. In after times, it, in a similar manner, opposed, but unsuccessfully, the devastating progress of Taïmūr the Tátár, who after its capture bestowed much care in restoring its fortifications.

It is impossible not to remark here how much, notwithstanding the rapid advance which is being made in our acquaintance with the comparative geography of the East, is wanting to give accuracy and correctness to the details of the progress of the crusades, and the history of the Latin possessions in Syria and Palestine.

As they at present exist, these histories are often little better than romance ; and indeed the crusades appear to have been long since given up as a theme only for poetry or fiction—the Zaires and the Malek Adhels.

It is not that noble exceptions to this present themselves in the labours of such men as Robertson, Mackintosh, Chateaubriand, and Guizot, who have justly vindicated the philosophy of these chivalrous enterprises, which were truly not mere questions of rescuing a tomb, but wars upon the outcome of which hung the issue as to whether the Christian or the Muhammadan religion should predominate in the world.

It is that no such thing as a correct history—correct in all the details of sites and topography—exists of the crusades. The best, the German work of Frederick Wilken, is unsatisfactory and incomplete in these points, and those of Mills and Michaud are equally imperfect

in minute details. It is an error to suppose that the exploits of the crusaders would lose in interest by being submitted to correct detail. They would, on the contrary, in countries like Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia, where the natural beauties are so great, and the archæological and scenic features are generally of the most picturesque character, gain by such details to an unimagined extent.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PLAIN AND LAKE OF ANTIOCH.

SHORTLY after our return I received orders to explore the Kara Sū or 'Blackwater,' which coming down from the long valley east of the Amanus, flows into the lake of Antioch, again issuing forth at the southern end of the lake to join the Orontes not far from Antioch. I was accompanied on this excursion by Mr. Bell, who had been engaged as interpreter at Malta, quite a young man, of adventurous disposition, and who afterwards entered the service and became the first favourite of the unfortunate Theodore, King of Abyssinia, whose whims for detaining Europeans in his dominions cost the country so many valuable lives and much money.

A kind of punt or flat-bottomed boat was obtained, with two men to propel it with poles, and we started on August 22, 1835, soon passing from the Orontes into the 'Blackwater,' and we continued on our way up the latter, passing on our right hand a mound of debris marking an ancient site, upon the top of which a tomb had been erected in honour of some holy man.

The two men we had to propel us made but slow progress, added to which, although the current was not strong, the river was very tortuous; and night

coming on, the men did not like to venture upon crossing the lake in darkness. The boat was accordingly for better security run out of the channel into the marsh, consisting at the outlet of the lake, of reeds with occasional willow trees, their aged trunks half buried in water. We had not a pleasant night of it : the mosquitoes came down upon us like a cloud, and added, by their incessant humming and piercing bites, to the dismal character of the swamp and to the general unpleasantness of our position.

We were glad to start next morning with the break of dawn, not waiting for daylight ; but our mode of propulsion not allowing the punt to take the open water, the lake was crossed by holding on to the limits of the marsh and jungle, but even with this tedious mode of progression, we were enabled to reach the 'Blackwater' where it entered the lake at its north-west extremity the same day ; but were forced to pass the night in a somewhat similar position to that on the other side of the lake, only that the channel of the river was less discernible from the number of aquatic plants which nearly choked it, and which harboured numerous waterfowl.

We continued our way up the 'Blackwater' the ensuing day, our progress being somewhat impeded by the close vegetation, amid which beautiful nymphæas and nuphars—naiads of the stream—made themselves peculiarly conspicuous by their gorgeous beauty ; the common white water-lily, especially, attained great perfection, its large flower filled with petals so as to appear almost double, expanding to a gigantic size. Nor was

our progress wanting in life. Here and there a solitary heron watched in motionless silence for a passing fish ; red-legged storks waded in the marsh, where crested herons herded in troops ; spur-winged plovers screeched above us, bald coots stole away behind tufts of reeds or rushes, various kinds of duck winged their long flight away, while giant pelicans sailed bravely before us, the punt being unable to match them in speed.

We continued up the 'Blackwater' to where it was joined by another stream from the north-east called the Egri or 'crooked,' and we turned up this latter stream till we came to the mound or tell of Gul Bashi, or 'the head of the lake,' a little beyond which was a bridge and causeway putting a stop to further navigation. This causeway constitutes part of the highway from Aleppo to Alexandretta, is some three miles in length, and is carried through marsh and inundation. The tell is a mound of debris, denoting an ancient site, lying on an isolated wall of basalt, out of which at the easterly side issues an abundant spring which forms a pond full of fish. The Arabs had wisely built their huts on the top of the mound, so as to be above the malarious air.

Having thus satisfied ourselves of the navigability of the Kara Sū and Egri Sū, as far as to the highway across the northern part of the plain of Antioch, we hired horses in order to pay a visit to Achmet Bey, the chief of the Rai Anlu Turcomans, who enjoyed by some prescriptive right the monopoly of pasture over this vast plain.

Our progress across the plain was impeded in places



by coverts of umbelliferous plants which attain a height exceeding that of a horse. These coverts were also the home of boas which attain an enormous size for the climate. I measured one that had been killed by the natives, and it was thirteen feet long. We passed several encampments of Turcomans on our way, at each of which we were assailed so fiercely by the dogs, that it was with difficulty they were prevented biting the horses' legs or our own heels.

At length we arrived at Achmet Bey's encampment. The attendants rushed out to seize the horses' heads, and in a few minutes we were ushered into the presence of the young chieftain—a handsome youth who received us courteously, but as the object of our visit was to express our commanding officer's regret at the little aid tendered to the Expedition in the way of camels (and we saw plenty in the course of our ride) and there were two Egyptian officers on a visit at the time—we got very little by our objurgations. Colonel Chesney considered himself as acting under the authority of the Sultan. Ibrahim Pasha was in rebellion against the Sultan, and in possession of the country, so that an unpleasant state of things was the result. Whatever may have been the political proclivities of the young Turcoman chief, he could not countenance those who were not in favour of the then ruling power.

The tents of the Turcomans, such as we were now received in, were very spacious, with a camel and goats' hair canopy stretched upon rows of small poles. The interior was divided into two compartments, both of which were open in front, one devoted to the women,

the other to the men. The latter constitutes at once the living and reception room, and that of Achmet Bey was luxuriously furnished with carpets and cushions in bright colours. The women, however, moved about from one apartment to another with uncovered faces, and pursued their usual avocations without regard to strangers.

These women were not bad-looking, but much plainer in their attire than the men. They are particularly industrious in their various occupations, which include the manufacture of tent-cloths, of large double horse bags, of men's cloaks, and of those fine woollen carpets which more than rival those of Persia—the blue, green, and red dyes of the Turcomans being superior to those of Kirman and Yezd.

Piles of these carpets were to be seen in almost every tent of these industrious nomades. Burghul, or bruised wheat boiled, rice, cheese, butter, kaimak or clotted cream, labban or sour milk, and other preparations of milk and cream, ghee or boiled butter, bread in thin cakes, baked on an hemisphere of iron, dibs or the boiled juice of raisins, eggs, and honey constitute their chief fare, which like their residences and condition generally is much superior to that of the Arabs. The fare is, however, pretty nearly the same in regions not favourable to the growth of dates, variety being afforded by an occasional fowl with rice (pilau), eggs fried in ghee, and on high festivals a kid stuffed with raisins and rice. We must not omit to notice, everywhere there are coffee and chibuks or pipes for the visitor.

The Turcomans of the Rai Anlu, Jerid, and Rishwan

tribes inhabiting the north of Syria have a well-formed athletic frame, and they dress well, with the usual Oriental propensity for bright gaudy colours and showy arms.

The movement of a camp from one place to another is a very ceremonious affair. It is carried out with that punctilious regard to order which was once characteristic of a Scottish clan. The procession is headed by an advance guard of armed men with shields, others march in file alongside the caravan, and the remnant make up a rearguard.

The march of a tribe—the slow and stately pace of the camels laden with the tents and tent poles, the bullocks carrying the women and children, and the solemn tread of the warriors, only now and then enlivened by the curvetting of some mounted chief amusing himself by throwing the jerid or brandishing his tasselled spear—constitutes an imposing spectacle, to which a dash of the ridiculous is involuntarily imparted by the extreme gravity of all concerned, and the assumption of an air of haughty pride which seems to be meant to assert that a nomadic life gives to them an immeasurable superiority over all strangers, cottagers, or tillers of the soil. It is the same with the Bedwins and the nomadic Kurds. The Bedwin despises the Maidan or settled Arab, and the nomadic Kurd cherishes that indifference to tillage which, if it does not lead to wealth, most assuredly contributes to independence of character.

The report made to Colonel Chesney, on our return to Antioch, as to the capabilities of the affluent of the lake up to Gul Bashi, led to the adoption of this line,

as presenting not only a means of transport by water, but also a shorter route than by the Iron Bridge.

A dépôt was accordingly established at a spot on the Orontes a little above Antioch, known as Kuzil or Ghuzel Burj—‘the pretty tower’—and another at Gul Bashi. Rafts of wood floated on pontoons were hastily constructed under the superintendence of Charlewood and Fitzjames, and it was not long before the whole line of navigation was full of life and activity.

About the same time Lieutenant Cockburn, of the Royal Artillery, was despatched with a party to throw up some light field works and construct slips at a spot selected for this purpose on the right bank of the Euphrates, about a mile and three-quarters below the ferry and ancient zeugma of Bir or Birtha, afterwards called Port William.

Cleveland and Charlewood were superintending the transport of the heavy weights from Amelia dépôt to Kuzil Burj; Fitzjames superintended the water-transport, whilst Eden was engaged forwarding light stores by camels and mules by the Iron Bridge. Thus, by the latter end of June, the transport may be said to have been in full operation.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE ANSARIANS.

PENDING the carrying out the transport, I made an excursion, accompanied only by a muleteer, to the hilly region to the south of Antioch, being anxious to extend my geological reconnaissances in that part of the country.

We started through the gap in the hills behind Daphne, where Thomson and I had once been hunted by jackals, and passing through a hilly but beautifully wooded country, known to the ancients as Anti-Casius, and dotted with villages, we arrived at about noon at the village of Sheikh Gui, where I was kindly received and hospitably entertained by the Sheikh. Proceeding on our journey, our progress was stayed by twilight, and we were reduced, in the search for quarters, to make a toilsome ascent up a narrow pathway, carried like a snake along the face of the rock, but which led to a goodly village, affording good entertainment for man and horse, and rendered not the less acceptable from being generously proffered.

The next day we turned eastward up the valley of the Nahr el Kebir, or 'the great river,' and fording it at a distance of ten or twelve miles east of Latakiyeh, we

advanced into the country of the Nusairyeh or Ansarians, at one of whose villages we stopped for the night.

An incident occurred on approaching this village that surprised me not a little. I was sauntering up a hill, leading my mule by his bridle, when I met an elderly man, with a fine open countenance, who came forward and shook hands heartily. This done he turned round to be my guide to his cottage. 'Was this,' I said to myself, 'one of the Assassins, as the crusaders called the Ansarians, and my friend "the old man of the mountain?"' If so, he was a hospitable old man, and so were the women, the latter bringing me milk and eggs and bread, and the sweet juice of the grape, with faces uncovered, in picturesque attire, and the hue of health heightened by kindly dispositions.

These Ansarians consider themselves to be Syrian aborigines of the districts which they inhabit. This comprises the irregular hilly country now known as the Jebel el Akrad or Kráad, as it is pronounced, as also as the Ansarian mountains, and which stretch from Anti-Casius to the Lebanon. They had their own chief or tetrarch in olden times, for Pliny notices (v. 23) Apamæa in Cœle-Syria as separated by the river Marsyas, or Upper Orontes, from the Tetrarchy of the Nazarenes.

The fact of their pristine distinction among the early Christian churches, and their separation from the See of Antioch, appears to have been the cause of their downfall. It was upon the dissensions of the early church that Muhammad founded his great system of imposture; and his followers, while acknowledging the

divinity of Christ, superimposed by the sword the supremacy of the Arabian self-created prophet.

It would appear that these secluded mountaineers, with few churches and still fewer teachers, and detached from communion with the learning and fidelity of Antioch, submitted readily to the doctrine of Muhammadanism, as at first inculcated. Unlike the kings of Hira and the Gassanite princes—the Roman viceroys of the Syrian Arabs—they waited not for the swords of the Islamites, but engrafted upon a lukewarm and unspiritual faith, doctrines which subserviency to the powers that were, and a long neglected condition, have alone been able to perpetuate.

With such a latitudinarian belief as the divinity of one God, and the prophetic inspiration at once of Jesus of Nazareth and of Muhammad, no wonder that the Ansarians fell into most of the superstitions by which they were surrounded.

Many were not to be distinguished from the Druses, a few became Maronites. They also admitted the carnal deification of the Khalif Hakīm, as the Shi'ahs do the divinity of Ali. Niebuhr, who derived his authority from a Jesuit manuscript, says that the Nassarians were seduced from their belief in Christ by the Khalif Hakīm, and led to substitute in his place Ali Ibn Abu Talib, son-in-law of Muhammad, whom they adored as a god (thus making Shi'ahs of them); and he adds that the Khalif moreover taught them, that the divinity had resided in twelve Imāms or chief priests of the house of Ali, but that having disappeared with Muhammad al Machdi, the last of these Imams, it had

now taken up its residence in the sun. Hence the reverence in which the Khalif Hakim was held.

To anyone who is acquainted with the number of forms to which the faith of Asiatics has attached the holiness of incarnation, these extremes of superstitious belief have nothing in them that is extraordinary. There is a tribe of Kurds called the Ali Ilahis, living east of the Tigris, who worship in the present day (or did worship), an existing incarnation like the Lama of Thibet, and this person was upon one occasion induced to pay a visit to the British Residency at Baghdad.

It has been asserted by some that these people obtained their name when they became Mussulmans. Thus Tychsen, in a memoir on the Nassarians, as he calls them, says that the most versed in Oriental literature consider the name as derived from their first conversion to Islamism in the seventh century by a certain Nassar.

But it is enough to point out that the Nazarenes or Nassarians were known under the former name by Pliny, as before noticed, as also that they existed as a Christian Tetrarchy under the Romans, to show that they were known by the name before the rise of Muhammadanism.

Volney penned a tradition of an old man, canonised by his fastings, prayers, and self-denial, in the town of Nassar, near Kufa, in A.D. 891. The date of this event is clearly fictitious, and the name of 'old man of the mountain' given to their chief in the times of the crusades is a mere version of Sheikh, which signifies



an aged man, and is applied indifferently to the head of a village, or the chief of a tribe, or to a holy man.

The term 'assassin' given to these people by the crusaders is pretty generally admitted to have been derived from their smoking hashish or hemp with their tobacco. The use of this herb is very common in the East. Under the name of Khūrūs in Persia, and Gunjah in India, this powerful narcotic is extensively used by the dissipated and depraved. The Indian, Persian, and Arabic physicians and authors treat of it in their works. Makrisi particularly describes, in glowing terms, certain pleasure resorts, Jenaina by name, near Cairo, which were famous above all for the sale of hashish or hashisha.

It is said in a work by Hasan to have been first used in 658 of the Hegira, by a Sheikh of the order of Haider. An Arab poet sings of this Haider's 'emerald cup,' an evident allusion to the rich green colour of a tincture of the herb. The Sheikh, it is said, only survived the discovery ten years, subsisting chiefly on the drug, and on his death, his disciples, by his desire, planted it round an arbour over his tomb—a fit emblem of his death.

It is at the best doubtful if these mountaineers were the only ones alluded to by the crusaders as 'assassins.' We have only the authority of William of Tyre for the especial identification, and there may have been other hashish smokers, Arab or Kurd.

Volney and Burckhardt interested themselves in seeking out how much there was that was pagan in

these Christian-Muhammadan doctrines. The solar apotheosis of their chief prophet is declared to have been a pagan dream; but how far the doctrine of metempsychosis is grafted on the worship of Báal, or what affinity exists between Báal-Phezer and the Juggernaut of India, appear really to be questions but remotely connected with the Ansarians, supposing they did admit the transmigration of souls as one of their many strange beliefs.

The Ansarians have also been calumniated in common with the Ismaelites or Ismaelis, the Kadmusiyeh of Volney and the Izedis or Yezidis, Kurd worshippers of Ized, the 'evil spirit,' as performing rites of an infamous description, similar to what were laid to the charge of the ancient Gnostics.

While aimed at these remote and defenceless people—and I have dwelt among Ansarians and Izedis alike—I believe that the charge only recoils as a calumny made against human nature generally by those who give an easy belief to such injurious statements.

I would not, indeed, have occupied so much space with an account of these interesting people, but for the fact of the mystery in which they are enveloped.

The Hon. Lt. Walpole has, indeed, devoted three volumes to an account of his travels among them. I have wished on my part as far as possible to simply depict the natural result of a secluded people tossed about upon the billows of Paganism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism, and in the last of these between Sunnism and Shi'ahism, and who possibly among them-

selves have taken refuge in Theism as the only safe harbour where there is much doubt and confusion. But the adoption or practice of obscene rites I believe to be reports emanating from the scandal-loving brains of opposing sects who have retailed these defamatory libels to credulous travellers.

## CHAPTER VI.

## EXCURSION IN CŒLE-SYRIA.

QUITTING my hospitable friends, the Ansarians, I felt a certain degree of pleasure on crossing the crest of the mountains, in being able to test the accuracy of Maundrell in the description given in his travels of a remarkable feature in the rocks nigh to the summit of the Jebel el 'Akrad. The Nahr el Kebir is really found at this point forcing its way through a cleft which is about thirty yards in depth and scarcely eight feet in width. As might be expected, many local legends are attached to so rare a phenomenon.

I descended on the eastern side of the hilly range into the valley of the Upper Orontes or Marsyas, as Pliny calls it, crossing the river by an ancient bridge, now called Jisr Soghier, or 'the little bridge.'

The site of the old Macedonian town of Seleucus ad Belum is now marked by a mere hamlet. It has been supposed by Salmasius that the place derived its designation from a river of that name, but this is not the case, as it is on the Orontes, and Harduin has more justly opined that it obtained this distinctive and rather remarkable appellation from the mountain of Báal or Belus that arises above it, separating the vale of Cœle-

Syria from Chalcidene, and now known as the S'hah-salu or Isawi hills.

Seleucus ad Belum became, subsequent to Macedonian times, a Christian episcopate, the presence of whose mitred representative is recorded in the Acts of the Councils under the title of Seleuco-Belitanus.

Advancing hence up the renowned valley of Cœle-Syria, its leading features may be summed up in a few words: a central sluggish river, with a tortuous course—expanding in places into lakelets—a level tract of greensward and marsh, along which courses the ancient highway, marked in places by a Roman causeway and by Roman milestones, and on both sides ranges of hills, of moderate elevation, tame outline, and naked acclivities, in this respect differing widely from Anti-Casius or Casiotis. Many of the marshy spots with lakelets owe their origin to abundant springs, which burst forth like rivulets at the foot of Mount Belus.

The riches and renown of the cities of Cœle-Syria would at once attest to its capabilities and its importance of old, had not history shown that the different dominating nations in the East were ever contending for its possession.

At its head stood Báalbek with its gorgeous temple, and Emesa, surnamed the 'noble'—

*Emesæ fastigia celsa resident.*<sup>1</sup>

Next came Epiphanea—the home of the Hittites, and the Hamath of Holy Writ—still a populous and prosperous city, then the Episcopates of Arethusa and

<sup>1</sup> Avienus, v. 1084.

Larissa, followed by the royal haras of the Seleucidæ, the templed Apamæa, and beyond these several other sites, of more or less importance in antiquity, reared their glittering turrets even unto Antioch, now standing in lonely and widowed pride in its vast extent of turreted walls, climbing over rock and vale beyond.

It is easy to understand why this valley, favoured by nature, but so long a land of contention, and, like the passes of Cilicia, the great military road between Northern Syria and Southern Syria and Palestine, has undergone many changes and often witnessed the prosperity of years overwhelmed by the devastations of a day. Not a city but has seen a combat before its walls—not a lakelet but has had its limpid waters stained with blood.

Hence it was probably, and in part also, that, with a few exceptions, the early Christians did not abide within this valley, preferring the apparently rocky wastes (but with good agricultural soil), east of Mount Belus.

Yet, on the one side abundant springs of pure water flow from the foot of the hills, on the other side the rain of heaven was with difficulty preserved in tanks hewn at vast expense and labour out of solid rock. But in the latter case, whilst on the hill sides there is nothing but a continuous pavement of stone, like a province marked out on a marble slab, there was beyond, what there is not in the 'Hollow-way,' a boundless expanse of fertile soil, extending down to the wilderness of Chalcidene, and in such a region, the frequent invasions and the perpetual persecutions so rife in the valley, were to a great extent avoided.

I was glad when, on reaching the small stream of Hawash, with a village of the same name, the muleteer proposed to rest there for the night, for one of my fits of ague was just coming on; and having made the usual bed of rug and saddle-bags on the greensward, the rest of the evening was taken up by involuntary shakings and cramps, followed by a still more unwelcome leaden and death-like feeling, as if all circulation was suspended, and which lasted until a profuse perspiration broke out, and then there was utter relief. At the time of what might be called the struggling stage of reaction, I used often to fancy myself two persons, one of which was well, and extremely indignant at the other being so perseveringly ill.

A short ride next morning, past Lake Taka celebrated for its black fish so much appreciated by the Romans, brought us to where a wide valley opened into Mount Belus to the east, bearing a small rivulet in its centre. At the entrance to this opening in the hills was a huge mound, part of rock, part of debris, about three hundred feet in elevation, and upon the summit of which was a modern, mud-walled, hut-encumbered and ruinous looking castle, styled Kalat el Mudik, or 'the castle of the defile,' and which was probably once the site of the acropolis of the Apamæa of the Seleucids, and so named after the wife of the first of the dynasty, and which from its projection in front of the pass was also sometimes called Chersonesus.

There was a khan and also a mosque with a minaret, in reality the plural of minar (a Muhammadan temple with a minar is a masjid, with minarets or two

minars a jami), in the valley; but we wound our way slowly up the tortuous path that led to the castle, and entered its sombre and dilapidated portals. An aged sheikh who occupied the best hut that existed within its precincts, received and entertained us hospitably.

At Apamæa, as elsewhere in the East, it is with the past rather than the present that we have to do. At every step the traveller takes, the naturally more exciting interest he feels in the phases of a living humanity and the communion of his fellow-creatures is damped by the dulness of an ignorant stupidity or alienated by the suspicious instincts of a savage wisdom which the pride of an imaginary superiority and the satisfaction entailed by a supposed religious ascendancy by no means tend to soften or to render more approachable.

It was then with some feeling of despondency, that I turned to the contemplation of ruins of ancient times, so suggestive of happier days and of a more cultivated race of people—a despondency which, on this as on many other occasions, forced itself the more strongly upon me from the contrast which history and tradition (upheld by existing monumental ruins) conjured up as opposed to the existing condition of the East.

Here stood before me all that remained of a city which under the Syro-Macedonian dynasty was always the bulwark of the kingdom of Antioch. Here, besides a strong garrison, no less than five hundred elephants (an elephant constituted the exergue upon the civic coins), were kept for purposes of war, and the royal haras or stables are said to have accommodated upwards of thirty thousand mares and three hundred stallions.



People were employed in training the young offspring of this regal stud, and there were also masters of arms and of military exercises.

When on the break-up of the Macedonian empire, Egypt fell to the Ptolemies, it was found that that kingdom could not prosper without Syrian provinces to supply wood for the construction of ships, and upon the defeat of the Regent Perdiccas by Nicanor (B.C. 320), Phœnicia and Cœle-Syria were seized and garrisoned mainly for this purpose.

It was the same thing in the time of Muhammad Ali, and whilst we were in the country, his lieutenant—Ibrahim Pasha—was ever busy felling timber in the forests of Amanus and Rhosus and importing it to Egypt.

The frequent wars which resulted from this state of things, and which were carried on by Ptolemy against Antigonus, were legacied to Seleucus Nicator, and to his successor Antiochus the Great, who first succeeded in overthrowing Egyptian dominion in Syria.

It was indeed for the possession of this coveted region that Cleopatra, sister to Alexander the Great, was put to death by Antigonus. It was this country which, having been promised as a dowry to Cleopatra, mother of Ptolemy Philometer, was claimed by the son, sword in hand, and it was the conquest of this province by Antiochus which first led to Roman interference in the affairs of the East, and finally to the overthrow of the Syro-Macedonian empire.

The possession of the Temple of Apamæa, renowned in antiquity, became on the rise of Christianity the

constant cause of conflict between Seleucids and Christians, for Sozomenus (lib. viii. cap. 15) relates that the Christians held the temple to the great annoyance of the disbelievers who made war against the former for its possession.

What remains now of this distinction in the arts of war, of peace, and of holiness—this luxury, ostentation, and wealth? A rich but untenanted greensward, out of which rise the fragmentary remains of a temple—two pilasters with Corinthian capitals, a portion of the walls, and an arched window—all that now remain of the once coveted edifice.

The Christians had in their turn to give way before the iconoclastic Saracens, and the crusaders did not stay on their way to rebuild the temple.

Around, foundations of buildings are still traceable, and there also exist part of a strong wall, and of a semi-circular archway, but with these exceptions, and that of the Muhammadan castle, which has been erected upon the ruins of the peninsulated acropolis, all is desolate and neglected where once proud Apamæa stood!

A great authority upon such subjects, Strabo (p. 517), derives the names of the different Apamæas of the Macedonians from Apama, of whom there were two—one the wife of Seleucus Nicator, the other the wife of Magas; but Bochart ('Phaleg,' p. 94), derives the name from a Syrian word signifying the confluence of waters.

Although the first surmise is unquestionably the most acceptable, it is remarkable that Bochart's opinion derives some support from the fact that the Apamæa

of Mesene was at the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris, Apamæa of Sittacene at that of the Nahr-malcha or Royal river with the Tigris, Apamæa Cibotos at the confluence of the Marsyas and the Meander, and Apamæa of Cœle-Syria at the junction of the Belus with the Orontes. Although, as we have before seen, Pliny makes the Marsyas the line of separation between the Ansarians and Apamæa, I am inclined to think he meant the rivulet of Apamæa itself. Such a view of the case is further upheld by a passage in Strabo (lib. xvi. p. 519) where he speaks of Chalcis as ‘the citadel and treasury of the plain of Marsyas.’

This little rivulet was not only called Belus (Salmasius ad Solinum, cxxxvi.), but also Axium, for which latter name Cellarius (‘Not. Orbis Antiq.,’ vol ii, p. 354) gives several authorities, and he also adds that the elephant on the coins was accompanied by an inscription expressive of Apamæa being on the *Actæon* or Axium, as it is rendered by the Latins.

The peculiarity in the positioning of Apamæa is perceived to the greatest advantage in coming from the south. Thence it appears as a stronghold placed in a defile advantageous for purposes of resistance, and at the same time capable of opposing the advance of an enemy by the vale of Cœle-Syria, or by the plain of Chalcidene. It was on this account that in the rebellion of Cæcilius Bassus, the relief of its siege by Cassius decided the fate of the war.

## CHAPTER VII.

## REMAINS OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

A GRADUAL, almost imperceptible ascent, led from Apamæa to the level plains of Chalcidene, or what might be better expressed as the vast plains south of Aleppo, and which extend from the slopes of Mount Belus to the Euphrates.

These plains are now a mere wilderness, passing into desert as they stretch toward Palmyra, but in ancient times they were dotted with towns and villages, irrigated by the rivers of the north, and therefore having cultivated land around them.

The shades of evening overtook us on the slopes of the hills, and we were obliged to take refuge at a tell—as usual the debris of some ancient site—now called Zoraï, where in the darkness I spread my rug at the entrance of a dark and damp cave, from which myriads of mosquitoes issued forth to attack me with such fury that I was obliged to beat a hasty retreat to a higher and more exposed part of the hill.

About noon next day we broke our fast at Mar'ah, a village with a few huts and a guard-house, on the caravan route from Aleppo to Damascus. This spot appears to correspond to the Macra of Strabo, on the

border of Chalcidene and of the plain of Marsyas, for the watershed still flowed to the rivulet of Apamæa. The territory beyond this corresponds to the Zobah of Scriptures, whose king was at war with Toi, king of Hamath, and was defeated by David. South of Kinisrîn, ancient Chalcis, and the capital of the country, there exist in the present day extensive ruins of Androna, now called Balad-Khan-Azra, situated at the foot of the basaltic range of El Amri, which extends eastwards to the Valley of Salt (2 Sam. viii. 3), and six hours south, are the yet unvisited ruins of Seriane.

Evening brought us to the village of El Bara, where I sat down by a Mussulman's tomb while the muleteer went in search of provisions. Much delay ensuing I proceeded to the village, where I found my attendant gratifying his appetite, apparently very much to his own satisfaction, and intending to pass over to me whatever might remain of the repast.

I however anticipated him in his kindly intentions, and having got a fair share of the bread and cheese and milk, I spread my rug at a place where I had some difficulty in gathering as many dry thistles as would suffice to make a fire by which to boil a cup of coffee. I had for this purpose a small copper vessel in common use in the country, that held about two tea-cups of water, and was a great comfort in my various excursions.

Passing the village of Reihā we arrived early next day at a considerable collection of stone buildings, which, although in part ruinous and tenantless, were very remarkable, not only for their apparent freshness,

but also for their solidity and perfection of construction, in which respect they differed totally from the huts or houses of the Muhammadans.

These houses, which would bear comparison with edifices of the kind to be met with in Europe, were grouped in what might be designated as two separate villages, situate about half a mile from each other. Many of the dwelling-houses were so extensive that they must have belonged to communities, possibly the monasteries of the early Christians.

Amid these were several churches—quadrangular buildings, with aisles and double colonnades, and arches or arcades with masonry behind, and supporting architrave, and walls with pilasters at the sides and windows in front; and above all were pointed roofs of large slabs of stone, the gable ends having also windows.

I at first opined that these villages might have been places of refuge for the early Christians, when driven out of Apamæa by the ruthless followers of Muhammad; but I afterwards found the style of buildings to be characteristic in all the great centres of early Christianity in Northern Syria, especially in the district of Mount St. Simon, as also in the ancient province of Osrhoene or Edessa in Mesopotamia.

The order of architecture seemed to be very mixed, Roman with the general simplicity of the Grecian-Doric. The windows had a Tuscan character, the columns are divested of flutes, and the entablature is not well brought out, and is void of all ornaments. In the interior of the churches, the altars were not raised,

but were level with the floor, and were not placed in a sanctuary as in the churches of the Syro-Greeks.

A feeling of wonder naturally arises on thinking that houses which are so much superior to the vast mass of existing dwellings, and which attest to a much higher degree of civilisation among the early Christians than was ever attained among the Muhammadan peasantry, and from which the lapse of time and the tinge of age have not removed the freshness which strength and solidity imparted to them, should be without possessors, without claimants, and without tenants, or any one to dwell in them, while a poor poverty-stricken and depressed population is harboured in mud huts close by, and wandering herdsmen have no better shelter than a tent or a tree.

If the epoch of the raising of these solid edifices is, as is most probably the case, to be associated with periods anterior to the persecutions of the first followers of Muhammad, so also can their abandonment only be connected with the gradual return of the Christians to the towns and villages occupying more favoured positions.

Still the fact remains, and is still difficult to account for, that like some cities of Israel and Judæa, the houses of the early Christians should be thus forsaken and deserted, and that houses and monasteries and churches by hundreds are still standing in peopled districts, and that 'the cities are desolate without inhabitants, and the houses without man.'

The solution of the enigma appears to lie in the fact that the fanatical Mussulman scorns to dwell in houses

once tenanted by infidels, whilst the modern Christian obtains an easier livelihood in the cities; but still this utter abandonment of solidly built houses is very remarkable.

Some are content to look upon such ruins as 'the broken fragments of the once numerous churches that have now seen their seedtime, and have yielded up their harvest to the last and final day' (Rev. Mr. Formby's 'Visit to the East,' p. 36), but there are others who, like Dr. Keith in his 'Land of Israel,' relying on the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, still cherish confident hopes of a coming restoration, both of the land and the people. Be this as it may, the fact remains that whilst the multitude of houses and sacred edifices scattered over North Syria and Mesopotamia have been spared, the church to which they belonged and its congregations appear to have disappeared.

In front of these buildings were large and deep tanks or cisterns hewn in the hard limestone, with stairs to descend into them, and as in these rocky and dreary situations, where the buildings stand on a smooth surface of stone, it is impossible to cultivate anything in the immediate neighbourhood (although there was plenty of cultivation a little beyond), it is probably due, at all events in places, to this peculiarity of position, and to the absence of water, so indispensable in hot countries, that, persecution having ceased, the inhabitants removed elsewhere.

It only remains to be observed that these districts come within the limits of the promised land, as described by the Jewish lawgiver (Numbers, chap. xxiv.),



the north border of which comprised Zedad or Zobad (Chalcidene), and went down to the coast from Shepham (Apamæa) to Riblah (Antioch) on the east side of Ain 'the spring' (Daphne), unto the entrance into Hamath (Seleucia). These are identifications admitted by Hieronymus, Jonathan, Bochart, and other writers on sacred geography.

Whilst I was exploring these remains of early Christianity, the muleteer had gone on to Edlip, a straggling place, most of the huts being dispersed in gardens, and where we passed the night.

The next day we crossed the limestone hills, to descend once more into the valley of the Orontes. I was much struck upon this occasion, as the mules wended their way through a very narrow rocky pass, to observe that the long-continued passage of horses and mules had worn holes of from six inches to over a foot in depth in the hard limestone, and that at equal distances, so that any beast of burthen must perforce, whatever its stride, put its feet into the same holes. I thought the mules would repudiate such a break-leg pathway, and would carefully choose the level which presented itself between the successive holes; but not at all, they stepped into each in succession, and plunged away at them with unflinching perseverance.

How long must this narrow and, at this point, only pass through the mountains, have been in use? The time when the Seleucid kings had a park of elephants at Apamæa was modern compared with this old gap in the mountains. But permanence of roads, generally enforced by peculiarities in the configuration of the

country, is one of the characteristic features of the East, and is of the utmost value in determining the identity of modern and ancient sites.

There was a large and tolerably well-built village, many of the houses being constructed of stone, at the exit of the pass, called Armansura or Arbayin, but I did not stop here, preferring to ride on to the plain, where I had a delightful bivouac on the greensward, with plenty of dried grass wherewith to get fire sufficient to boil my usual cup of coffee.

And who would not have been happy in such a place, and such a climate (it was July 15)? The scenery around the valley of the river, wood-clad hills to the west, picturesque rocks with bubbling streams to the east, and ever the grand entrance into Hamath beyond! Not to mention what was always a source of pleasure to me—utter independence and freedom of action.

My excursion, which may be said to have terminated here, for the next day I reached Antioch, was made without entailing any drain upon the funds of the Expedition.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## INCIDENTS OF THE TRANSPORT.

ON my return I found that sickness had begun to interfere sadly with the efficiency of those engaged in the transport. Fitzjames lay at the 'Pretty Tower,' a most malarious position, in a very bad state, the fever affecting the brain, and Eden was brought down a few days after from Gul Bashi, another most unhealthy station, in a low typhoid stupor. A young sailor of the name of Brown had also been left at Antioch, labouring under acute inflammation of the brain, from which, alas! he never recovered.

The extent of my daily movements was much increased by this sad state of things. Colonel Chesney was at Port William, superintending the putting together of the steamers, and organising friendly missions to the Arabs, one of the Stauntons was with him, the other at Amelia depôt, so I had to ride almost daily to the 'Pretty Tower' or to Gul Bashi, at the head of the lake, and occasionally to Amelia depôt.

On one of these occasions I was descending by moonlight the winding pathway at the foot of St. Simon's hill, when I perceived at the bottom a waggon laden with one of the boilers of the steamers, without

apparently anyone to guard it, and although I gave a shout of recognition, no one answered it. Surprised at such an unusual occurrence, I rode up to the boiler, and, peering into the interior, espied two Maltese sailors, coiled up like reptiles, and somewhat ashamed at being thus found neglecting their watch.

To a rather sharp questioning as to the reason for their thus secreting themselves, the answer vouchsafed was 'Oh, sir! Oh, sir! there has been such a strange figure walking about on the hill side—a thing all in white, and so tall!' Probably some native on the look out for plunder. But I could not help laughing, as I rode away, at the superstition of the Maltese, for it was evident from their extreme terror that they fancied it was St. Simon himself who had been paying them a nocturnal visit.

These Maltese, with the exception of two or three, one of whom, yclept 'Malta,' a big good tempered-fellow who acted as cook for us during our excursion into Taurus, and also on the Euphrates steamer, turned out very useless fellows. They soon got disgusted with the labours and privations of the transport, and terrified by the prevalent sickness, and so one after another they hurried away to the sea-ports, from whence they could work their way home to their patron saints.

About this time a line of levels from the Mediterranean was begun by Murphy, assisted by Thomson and myself, but a temporary stop was put to the work, by the chief being laid up. The line was carried through vineyards, near the modern village of Suwaidiyah—the native rendering of Seleucia—and Murphy indulging

too freely in the tempting fruit, he had so severe an attack of dysentery that it was with difficulty I pulled him through it. He himself had given up all hopes of recovery.

An unusual misfortune happened also at this time to the Egyptian troops garrisoning the town of Antioch, and a detachment of which had been long since encamped on the outside of the town, and on the other side of the river, I suppose, to protect the line of transport!

I had gone out one evening on a stroll towards Daphne, Ibrahim Pasha's residence, when I encountered several soldiers who seemed to reel about as if intoxicated or bewildered, and some sat down utterly prostrated. I was intimate with the surgeon of the regiment—a gentlemanly young Frenchman—and at once went to see him. He was as alarmed at the state of things as I was, and told me he had had several deaths which he could not account for. After a close and persevering enquiry, we discovered that the poisoning of the men was due to the presence of large quantities of ergot of rye in their bread.

At or about the same time, poor old Sergeant Sym sank under the fever first contracted at Alexandretta.

On the slope of the wall-encircled hill of Antioch, and at the entrance of a remarkable ravine, which almost cuts the hill in twain, yet up and down the sides of which the solid walls are carried, are several sepulchral grottoes and rock chapels, the larger of which seemed to have been used as churches, probably

when the doors of the Apostolic See were closed by the persecutions of the Roman proconsuls.

One of these, situated on the east side of the ravine, is dedicated to St. Paul, whose holy mission to the Gentiles began at this favoured spot. To this place the body was removed through the streets of Antioch, not however without a flagrant insult on the part of an Egyptian soldier, who wantonly spat upon the coffin which was carried by Armenian bearers. Hands at once springing to the hilt of swords, ready to revenge so gross an insult, made the cowardly miscreant take himself off as rapidly as he could.

In the interior of this rock chapel, where possibly some of the apostles, if not the fathers of the Church, had ministered, was a little basin of pellucid water, like the baptismal font with the creeping path of stone purification in the Helio-Arkite mysteries, and in front of the temple was a very limited piece of ground covered with greensward. In this a grave had been dug, and in this, after reading the prayers of our Church, where the writer of the magnificent Epistle to the Corinthians had himself once resided, and at the entrance of a chapel dedicated to his memory, we deposited the mortal remains of an old soldier who had served his country well and faithfully. It was a most fitting place of rest, and a calm and beautiful sunset rested over his remains. Never did we look down on Antioch—the holy city—with feelings of such sad solemnity as when our hearts were so much in harmony with her present desolation.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ANTIOCH.

I REMOVED for good from Antioch to Gul Bashi on October 15, 1835, and remained there until the 31st. But before quitting a city of so much interest, especially so to Christians, who first received their distinctive appellation at this place, and after a residence there, on and off, of upwards of six months, I may be allowed to say a few words as to its present condition and its remaining monuments of antiquity.

The modern Antákíyeh is but a small town, covering only a very inconsiderable part of the site of ancient Antioch, the remainder being for the most part occupied by mulberry groves, vineyards, and fruit and vegetable gardens. The population, according to a census taken in Ibrahim Pasha's time, did not exceed 5,600 souls, of whom a large portion were Syrians of the Greek Church, having however only one place of worship. There were also a synagogue for Jews, and no less than fourteen mosques, a Muhammadan college, and several khans and hamams or public baths.

The houses are usually constructed of stone, but sometimes consist simply of a wooden frame filled up with sun-dried bricks, and having a pent roof covered

with red tiles. These red tiles give a peculiar aspect to Antioch as seen from a distance. In some, exterior staircases lead from the courts to corridors or balconies, in others the staircase is in the interior. Many of the courts are pleasantly shaded by orange and pomegranate trees, and the doors and windows generally face the west, for the sake of the cool breezes coming from that quarter during the heats of summer. The bazaar and streets are narrow and dirty, being but partially cleansed by a gutter in the centre.

The bazaars are poor, the principal goods offered for sale being a few fabrics of silk, cotton, or camel and goats' hair, and good red and yellow leather boots and shoes or slippers. Some meat and bread, poultry and eggs, plenty of fruit and vegetables, the latter, however, consisting mainly of the baydanjam (*Solanum Melongena*) and bamiyah (pods of *Hibiscus esculentus*), the common vegetables of the country. There were rice, maize, various haricot beans, pulse, and lentils.

Near to the river side are tanyards, and in the same neighbourhood were the offal houses, much favoured by the vultures. Ibrahim Pasha adorned the town by erecting to the westward, in front of Daphne, a serai or palace, which afterwards became a hospital, and beyond it extensive barracks. Unfortunately the stones of the grand old walls were utilised for these purposes, and in the course of pulling them down, the bust of a Roman emperor was found, which Ibrahim Pasha gave to Mr. Consul Barker.

The river, as we have before said, is crossed by a bridge, part of the foundations of which appear to belong



to a remote antiquity, and it is protected by a covered way and gate, called Báb Hadíd, or the 'Iron Gate.' Beyond this gate was a guardhouse and a burial-ground, with gardens in the rear. Besides this gate, there are also the Báb Jinaïn or 'Gate of the Gardens,' Báb Ladikiyeh or of Lattakia, and separated from the modern town by a mile of tree and shrub-clad ruins, but within the ancient walls, is the gate known as Báb Baulus, or of St. Paul.

This is a light and handsome structure, with a circular arch resting on lofty pilasters, the intervening spaces between which are filled with solid masonry. Close by is a plane of gigantic size, overshadowing an open court which had been converted into a coffee-house.

It is a beautiful spot, the walls climbing the rugged hills beyond, and the tall towers skirting them like guardian giants of stone. Often have I sat here on a summer's eve, passing over in my mind that under this very gate Paul and Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, and a host of other fathers of the Church, may have passed by. It is in this respect the most interesting remnant of Antioch, for there are but few other well determined relics of an early Christianity.

Much difficulty is met with in any endeavour made to trace the antiquities of Antioch in relation to the epochs which they illustrate. According to some authorities, there existed a previous city, which had been a repair of Antigonos, and which was called after his name, but it must—as was also the case with the

Riblah of greater antiquity—from the very peculiarities of the configuration of the soil, have been at or near the same point.

Seleucus Nicator is said to have removed the inhabitants of Antigoneia to a new quarter of the city, and the inhabitants themselves are said to have built a second quarter. Seleucus Callinicus built a third, and Antiochus Epiphanes a fourth. While the flatterer Libanius and the old chronicler Malela would have us believe that a city existing from the most remote times was founded by Alexander himself.

The Emperor Julian, in his 'Misopogon,' gave the credit of its origin to Antiochus son of Seleucus. By origin is probably meant the name first appropriated to it by the Macedonian conquerors, and which has ever since been attached to it.

I must leave to others to decide upon the local distribution of this Tetrapolis of the Antiochidæ and Seleucids.<sup>1</sup> As to the city, described by Pliny as existing on the other side of the river, nothing remains in the present day, save some old stones in a Mussulman burial-ground.

In the vicinity of the grotto churches of St. Paul and St. James (at the former of which we buried Ser-

<sup>1</sup> The foundations of thick walls are to be seen on the road to the Iron Bridge, at a point where the hills approach nearest to the river, which Pocock thought might indicate the site of Antigoneia, the city that preceded Antioch. General Chesney is, however, inclined to identify the numerous remains met with near Daphne with the city of Antigonus (vol. i. p. 428), but he is not supported in this conjecture by Strabo (xvi. 750), Diod. Sic. (xx. 47), Liban. Antioch. (349) and Malela (256), who all describe Seleucus as founding Antioch a little lower down the river than the city founded by Antigonus; that would be, if Pocock is right, at the site of the present Antioch.

geant Sym) are to be found traces of a colossal head, apparently of a sphinx, as also of a full-length figure, both in bold relief, cut in solid rock and belonging apparently to Assyrian times. Some, however, have associated them with the connection between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies, and others have suggested that the grottoes were the tombs of some of the Egyptian princesses, who were wedded to the kings of Antioch, before they became Christian chapels. But they appear to date back to periods long before these.

During the several centuries of Roman prefecture-ship of Syria, Antioch continued its importance as the capital of the province, of which, indeed, the land of Judæa was but a dependent procuratorship.

It was still the centre of an extensive commerce, and Daphne was at that epoch at its zenith as a place of luxury and pleasure.

The walls of Antioch, which ascend from the river near Daphne to the west, up the steep acclivity to the summit of the ridge (but partly destroyed in this direction), follow the crest of the hills, dip into the cleft where are the grotto chapels and sepulchres, and they rise again to descend the cliff to the gate of St. Paul and the river beyond. They have been attributed to the Roman era, but the Tetrapolis of the Antiochidæ must have had its defences too.

These walls form with the river a kind of parallelogram, of which the Orontes constitutes the base. They constitute perhaps the most remarkable of all the Syrian monuments, but have been repaired by the Muhammadans and by the crusaders, and circular towers of

various ages still secure the weakest points. An acropolis, or castellated building of greater dimensions, occupies the summit of the ravine in which the grottoes are situated.

Owing to the steepness of the declivity at that point, the ordinary platform surmounting the wall is converted into a succession of steps between the towers which are here more numerous. These towers are of uniform construction, being about thirty feet square, and they project each way, so as to defend the inner side as well as the exterior face of the wall, which is from fifty to sixty feet in height, and eight to ten feet in width at the top, where it is further defended by a parapet. The defences of Antioch may really be regarded as a chain of small castles connected by a curtain as much as a wall defended by bastions.

The turrets or fortalices have interior staircases and three loop-holed stages, resting on arches, the uppermost of which has a stone platform and a small cistern for water beneath. So that each fortalice could defend itself, while low doors or passages opened upon the ramparts, by which communication could be kept up with one another.

It was by the betrayal of one of these towers—called that of the Two Sisters, but afterwards designated as the Tower of St. George,—by the Christian Pyrrhus, that the crusaders were enabled to obtain possession of their first Syrian principality.

The fragments of a Greek inscription in iambic trimeter verse still exist on one of these towers, but only a few words can be deciphered.

Sunk to ruin by time and tumult,  
... Medon had hastily built  
With haste and difficulty  
The army of the . . .  
The Tower.

The fortunes of Antioch constitute, with its pre-eminence in the history of Christianity, the most remarkable features in its ever enduring celebrity. Its kingly splendour, its pleasurable attractions, its commercial and industrial prosperity, its learned and religious supremacy, have all alike been overthrown by the most fearful prostrations that could befall a city, the most dreadful earthquakes, wars from without, and civil wars within.

The latter began even among the successors of Alexander the Great, in the time of Seleucus Callinicus, and were continued under Antiochus the Great. Religious antagonism attained its height under Antiochus Epiphanes, and excited the revolt of the Maccabees. Alexander Zebina plundered the temple of Jupiter, and the walls are said to have been overthrown on several occasions.

It is on this account that the city of many kings and princes, the Roman prefecture of Syria, and the chief patriarchate of the East, whose numerous churches ranked among the finest in the world, have, with the exception of its walls and towers, the strongest bulwark of Roman Asia, so little to show of those once proud times.

In a retired spot towards the centre of the rocky ridge above, are the remains of a circular structure, about ninety feet in diameter, partly excavated in the

rock and enclosed by a wall some four feet high. Tradition points to this as all that remains of the once celebrated temple of Jupiter.

It was at the epoch of the Romans that Antioch obtained distinction as one of the earliest centres from whence the 'glad tidings' of the Gospel went forth. Hence was it afterwards distinguished as 'the eye of the Eastern Church.' It was here that Paul and Barnabas were first separated from the other apostles to carry out the work unto which they had been called.

It was, according to Josephus, the right of citizenship granted alike to the Jews in common with Greek Syrians, which rendered Antioch so desirable to the professors of the new faith, but who were at that time looked upon merely as a sect of the Jews, and it was here that they were first called by the name of their Lord and Master (Acts xi. 26), and the most ancient testimonies regarding the three orders of the Church, bishops, priests, and deacons, are derived from Ignatius, whom the apostles had appointed Bishop of Antioch (Chrysostom, 'Hom. in Ignat.,' ii. 593), and who wrote letters to other churches only fifteen years after St. John's death.

The grotto churches of St. Paul and St. James, and the gate of St. Paul, constitute the sole existing remnants of the early dawn of Christianity. One traveller, Pocock, saw some pieces of marble and of mosaic pavement, which he fancied might indicate the site of a patriarchal church, and he suggested that the patriarchal palace stood on the top of a hill in its vicinity. Such is the end of the apostolic see. 'A vague con-

jecture,' says Keith, 'is the only homage that can now be paid to the departed glory of the throne which exercised supremacy over 240 bishoprics.'

Antioch was embellished by Justinian in A.D. 529, and called by him Theopolis, the 'city of God'—a designation of which the city might well be proud—but the Persian host under Chosroes (Kai Kubad), took the place by storm nineteen years afterwards, and are said to have burnt it to the ground. Retaken by the unfortunate Belisarius, Justinian rebuilt it in A.D. 562, to fall again in A.D. 574. The Saracens, under the brave but humane Obeidah, captured the city in the year A.D. 637 or 638.

The Moslems busied themselves in repairing the walls, and are said to have added additional towers. Among the ruins which ascend the hills to the westward are still to be noticed a tower with a square basement, which has four Saracenic arched entrances; but the same tower is surmounted by a round tower, which rises thirty feet high, apparently of a Norman style of architecture, and belonging to the time of the crusaders.

Idrisi describes the buildings of Antioch as being, in the time of the Khalifat and of Arab dominion, 'magnificent,' its markets flourishing, its industry and resources great, and its manufactures and commerce prosperous.' But the descriptions of Arabian historians and geographers must be looked upon in the light of comparisons made with other cities in the East, not of comparisons with the cities of Europe or of the New World.

The city was retaken by Nicephoras Phocas in A.D. 966, and in A.D. 970 an army of 10,000 Saracens are said to have besieged it without success, but a short time afterwards they effected its subjugation.

In the year A.D. 1097 the crusaders appeared for the first time before its walls, but it was not till June 3, 1098, that the city was carried by stratagem. In 1187 the fall of Azass and the capture of the Iron Bridge on the Orontes by Arabs and Kurds under Salah-ud-din (Saladin), Prince of Mosul, caused the inhabitants to purchase their safety.

Bibars, the Mamlūk Sultan of Egypt, carried the unfortunate city by storm, May 29, 1268; and it remained under the Mamlūk dominion till 1517, when Selim I. overthrew that strange and straggling power, designated by Oriental writers as the Alai Doulet, and Syria became absorbed in the Osmanli Empire.

During the long succession of Osmanli beys or princes, Antioch has been often governed by independent beys who have set the Sultan at defiance. This was the case in the time of Burckhardt in 1812. After the fall of Aleppo, it yielded without a struggle to the Egyptians under Ibrahim Pasha—a chieftain who for a time dreamt of reviving the monarchy of Syria in its ancient capital. The place was, as we have seen, under his rule upon the advent of the Euphrates Expedition. He upheld his dominion at Nizīb, but the country was restored to the Osmanlis by the operations of the British fleet on the coast of Syria in 1840.

There is something in the innumerable reverses of fortune and evils to which this ancient city and its



inhabitants have been exposed which cannot but be suggestive of melancholy contemplation, but in which the more painful considerations are soothed by comparison with what has happened, and will apparently continue to happen, to those cities which have arisen upon modern civilisation.

The history of the congregated dwellings of mankind presents us pretty nearly everywhere with similar records of fatal events brought about by the wilfulness of man. The rise of new opinions, the hatred of races, religious fanaticism, the rivalry of parties and factions, even the mere restlessness of the age, have been followed by wars, revolutions, or anarchy, and these by unflinching tyrannies imposed upon a would-be administrative populace, just as much as in the times of a Licinius or a Gallus in Antioch.

It was the jarring interests of principles of belief and even of forms of prayer, the everlasting ambitioning of each to point out to the other the path to heaven, and the abhorrence of all other modes of worship than their own, which even at these early times cursed mankind with fatal feuds; and the hostility of Antiochus to the Maccabees, the apostasy of Julian, and the propitiation of Arianism by Valentinian, were as fertile in persecutions as paganism opposed to Christianity and Christianity to Islamism. Nor was cruelty confined to any one party. Antiochus and Vespasian at Jerusalem, and Pompey, Justinian, and the crusaders at Antioch, rival in their sanguinary exploits, Sapor as opposed to Omar, and Chosroes as opposed to Bibars.

An almost ineffable wonder arises on contemplating

such histories of ferocious hostility, not peculiar to one spot, but common to the whole family of man; to think how long the experience of the past shall be withheld from the counsels of mankind, and policy (as it is called) continue to disregard in the lessons of history the inherited maxims of moderation.

What are the benefits that have accrued to mankind from hostility of opinion or principle, or from detestable wars, compared to the triumphs of arts, wisdom, and a true piety? Look at the imperishable remains left to us by genius, by the toil of civilisation in the rear of scientific discovery, the more than human power which has been obtained by the progress of invention—and turn to the grey walls, of grief-worn aspect, of Antioch—no longer in lonely and widowed pride, as when Heraclius bade her a last farewell—the humbled and mourning daughter of the city of the Holy of Holies—but Antioch fallen and in ruins!

The third city of the Roman Empire, which raised three Cæsars to the Impèrial purple, now little better than a village—the Patriarchal See—nay the very tombs of the mighty dead—gone from the surface of the earth! Think that religion and learning dawned, that the lyre awoke to hymns of praise and joy, that the full light of a religion of meekness, humility, love, and charity, glowed over this spot, and that all has been superseded by the opposition of creeds and rivalry of power, and the heart bleeds with sorrow at the follies of mankind.

Ever the centre of a fiercely debated supremacy, the ‘entrance into Hamath the great,’ and the prophesied

boundary of the promised land, there now only remains at the same spot, the past for the Muhammadan, the present for the Christian, and the future for the Jew. Haughty contempt and deep-felt scorn and hatred characterise the followers of a warrior prophet; an unspiritual belief, bereft of that love and charity, and above all of that humility which constituted the basis of the teachings of their Master, belong to those who believe that the Redeemer suffered for them; while a silent hope and the prostrate stillness of a faith dependent on Jehovah stamp the character of the sons of Jacob.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE END OF THE TRANSPORT.

I LEFT Antioch finally on October 14, 1835, travelling by river and lake to the station at Gul Bashi.

The encampment had for purposes of transport been pitched on the greensward near the bridge of Murad Pasha, and at an unhealthy spot. Had they, however, chosen to do so, there was no room for them on the adjacent tell, the summit of which was occupied by the huts of the villagers.

The consequence was that there was a great deal of sickness, and a young artilleryman succumbed whilst I was there to the fever of the country. He had been ill, however, some time before my arrival, and a subsequent autopsy showed that he had almost entirely lost one of his lungs from previous illness.

The temperature at this season of the year was, however, agreeable, the thermometer not attaining upwards of 76° in the shade, yet the quantity of animal and more especially of reptile and insect life was truly remarkable. Immediately after my arrival the boat-swain brought a bottle full of centipedes which had been collected in the men's tents, and the sight of which conveyed anything but pleasing anticipations of what was to be expected in one's own dormitory.

Every evening after sunset, the interior of the tent in which the officers messed was crowded with running, crawling, and jumping creatures. The first that began to creep up the canvas walls were a species of black cricket, which differed from the *Gryllus campestris*, in the under wings being folded into a spiral appendage which protruded beyond the body.

With this black and ill-favoured looking insect, there came another of the same family, in which the wings and elytra were merely rudimentary. These were followed by frogs, which clambered in numbers up the tent poles. At the same time innumerable little Scutigerae, only differing from centipedes in having more abdominal than dorsal segments, whilst in the centipedes the abdomen is divided into the same number of segments as the back. These little insects ran about upon the table, pursuing moths and flies which they pierced with their poisonous mandibles, killing them instantaneously.

Next in abundance were the centipedes themselves which clambered after dark upon the chairs and tables in search of prey, but being of larger size, were generally made away with. One day we were sitting at dinner when Eden exclaimed that a centipede had crawled up the sleeve of his coat. Fitzjames, with characteristic alacrity, jumped up to the rescue and began pulling off Eden's coat, which he did so dexterously that the latter was not bitten.

But the most troublesome of all insects, being day visitors, were the great Amazonian or legionary ants, which penetrated everywhere and destroyed all my

collections of natural history. There was also a larger species of ant which lived in holes, from which it would issue forth, erecting its tail and opening its jaws in hostile attitude.<sup>1</sup>

Every evening we were also pestered by the jackals. They came to the encampment in troops, yelling and barking at the very doors of our tents. Yet so wary and agile were they in their movements, that although many attempts were made to shoot them, they were seldom successful.

The ferocity of these little animals was well known to us, not only from their stealing our sheep, but from a lamentable occurrence that took place at the station of the 'Pretty Tower.' The men there, wishing to be friendly with the natives, used to ferry them across the river till it became almost a regular thing. But when the station was removed to the Gul Bashi, a man, woman, and child came in the evening, and finding no boat had to sleep there. In the night they were attacked by the jackals, who are said to have carried away the child.

The river of Murad Pasha, like all the rivers of North Syria, abounded in fish, among which were barbel and carp, apparently the sacred fish of the Syrians, as also a peculiar kind of eel (*Ophidium mascumbolus*) and the round-tailed chub (*Cyprinus cephalus*), the *Muræna anguilla*, or eel-like muræna, roach, dace, and other common fish.

<sup>1</sup> I must refer the reader who may be interested in Entomology, for a more detailed description of these insects in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, vol. vi. p. 239.

But the most characteristic of the fish was the black fish (*Macropteronotus niger*), before noticed as a luxury obtained by the Romans from the river Orontes. This luscious fish, which our men would not eat, abounded in deep waters immediately below the bridge, and at first astonished our anglers by carrying away their tackle most unceremoniously.

Later on a native came in a boat to catch them for the Aleppo market. This he effected by the very simple process of drawing a large hook fastened to a pole sharply along the bottom of the water. There can be little doubt but that this is the kind of hook alluded to in Holy Writ, when it is said, 'Go and cast a hook and take up a fish' (Matt. xvii. 27), as also in the query, 'Canst thou draw leviathan with a hook?' (Job xli. 1). Such expressions would convey an utterly inadequate meaning if applied to an angler's hook, and the ways of the Easterns are more permanent than with the Westerns.

Notwithstanding the ague, Charlewood and myself went out shooting in the marshes, where snipe were abundant. It was rather alarming upon these occasions to observe with what threatening looks of surprise and anger, the shaggy buffaloes would view our noisy intrusion into their watery domain; nor was it at all safe to startle them by the sudden discharge of a fowling-piece in too close proximity, on which occasions we found they invariably made a charge at the offender.

Among other birds was a small plover, which appeared to form a link between the little collared plover and the *Charadrius Egyptus* of Hasselquist. It

was distinguished from the former by having a grey band on the brow and a white terminal band on the upper wing coverts. All the remiges were also black with a white band, and the side tail-feathers were also white, and it differed from the Egyptian plover in having yellow feet. The beautiful Aleppo plover, with a spur on the wing, was very common. So also were pretty little egrets, which I first met with near the Iron Bridge. Luckily the native ladies do not adorn their heads with their feathers, so their innocent lives are spared.

The beautiful hoopoe is also very common. It builds its nest in holes in the banks of rivers, and especially favours well-trod pathways, so that jackals may have a difficulty to get at its nest. Its presence lent a charm to many a weary ride.

Nor must I omit to mention the flamingo, which, common on the lakes south of Aleppo, was a rarer visitant here. The natives call it the *Tair el Ra'uf*, or 'the magnificent.' Mr. Vincent Germain—an old resident in Aleppo—assured General Chesney that these splendid birds assembled at times in large flocks at shallow places on the rivers of North Syria, and placing themselves side by side in several ranks, spread their tails so as to form a kind of dam, and thus they more readily catch the fish.

On October 31 I quitted the head of the lake with the sick, for the more healthy station of Gindaris. We passed a night at the hot baths previously noticed, and the next day reached the site of the old acropolis of Cyrrhestica.



Here we found Dürvish or Dervish Ali, whose services as an interpreter had been obtained since our arrival in the country, and who had provided two huts for our accommodation—one of which was converted into a hospital, and the other was kept for the officers, Fitzjames and Bell being at the time among the invalids.

This so-called Dervish Ali was a remarkable character. His real name was Elliot. He had received a good education, and had been a medical student, but having come to the East, his passion for wandering became so great as to lead him to sacrifice everything, even his religion, in order to gratify it.

With this view, and the better to facilitate his movements, he perfected himself in the Arabic language and assumed the garb and appearance of a dervish, by which means he was enabled to visit in safety all parts of the country. He was employed for some time by Colonel Taylor, the Resident at Baghdad, on an exploratory mission to trace the line of retreat of the ten thousand Greeks. A native damsel had been given to him as a spouse, in return for his having cured her of ophthalmia; but he exchanged her for a donkey, the latter being more useful in following the footsteps of the Greeks. This is not the only occasion which I have heard of of such an exchange having been made.

There was great difficulty in getting him to put some of his recollections on paper; he had lost all habit of writing, and was, in utter contrast to Orientals, in a perpetual fidget. At one moment the chair was too

high, at another the pen was bad, in fact the irksomeness of writing was quite inconsistent with his acquired habits.

The MS. of his journey is, however, said to exist, and to be among the late Colonel Taylor's papers. Mr. J. Baillie Fraser was permitted to see the said MS., and he says in his work on 'Mesopotamia' &c. (p. 304) that as Mr. Elliot possessed means of obtaining information which fell to the lot of few, the notes which he left are of immense value, more especially in respect to the manners and domestic habits of the people.

Dervish Ali had at this time just returned from a mission composed of the two Messrs. Lynch and Mr. Staunton, which had been sent to propitiate the Arabs on the Euphrates. They had visited the tribes of Wāldiyā, Gīzeh, Bū Sipahī, and others of the Anezeh. Their reception had been generally favourable, but as they were bearers of presents to the different sheikhs, one of the tribes, the Bu (abbreviation for abū, 'father') Lilchi by name, conceived the intelligent project of appropriating the whole to themselves, and they followed the party persistently for some days with these amiable intentions, carrying their hostility so far as to wound one of the attendants; but as this was explained away as a playful accident, and Captain Lynch's acquaintance with the character of the people had taught him the value of forbearance, a collision was avoided, and the Sheikh was afterwards anxious to compromise the matter by presents, which were, however, declined.

Mr. Elliot still wore the dress of a dervish, and hence he always went by the name of Dervish Ali.

His habits were exceedingly flighty, and he could not be depended upon for a moment. Having one night become a little indisposed, he put a candle into a paper lantern which he hung by the bow of his saddle, and took himself off across the stony and rugged hills of Mount St. Simon in utter darkness to Aleppo. He was, however, notwithstanding his peculiarities, of great use to the Expedition, and was employed after it broke up by Captain Lynch. His end was melancholy, he having, as I heard, perished on the desert between Baghdad and Damascus.

While we were at Gindaris the transport was going on with great activity, notwithstanding the difficulties which were still put in the way of obtaining beasts of draught by the authorities. Ibrahim Pasha finding, however, that we had no political objects mixed up with our proceedings, volunteered to send some men to our assistance, and so energetic were they in their way, that they brought me one day the ear of a bullock as a trophy of their exploits. A native youth was also killed on the road, the wheels of a waggon having gone over his head before it could be stopped. At this time also, a seaman who had recovered from several attacks of ague at Gul Bashi was brought in in a state of typhoid stupor, from which he never recovered, and of which he ultimately died at Port William. They were not without their trials at the latter place. They had much sickness, and one of the Liverpool mechanics, who had obtained leave from illness to return home, perished on the way.

Fitzjames and I took the opportunity while at

Gindaris to make an excursion to the home of St. Simon Stylites upon the rocky ridge known to the natives as Sheikh Barakat. We found, among other ruins, a quadrangular building with aisles marked out by double arches, and a handsome choir. Fitzjames made some sketches which were reproduced in General Chesney's work on the Euphrates Expedition.

It is at this spot, and not at the Bîn Kilisā or 'thousand churches' as the natives emphasise them, that tradition has placed the scene of the pious exhibitions of the Syrian zealots, which could only approximate, a then young religion, to the fanatic performances of the Indian yogues or fakirs.

At Gindaris the mean temperature of November was in the first fortnight 64°; in the third week 60°. The rainy season was now fast approaching, the transport was supposed to be nearly over, and preparations were made to remove the sick to Port William. Dr. Staunton was sent from thence to assist me with a covered waggon, which was so fitted up as to make it a convenient and comfortable means of transport.

We started on the 23rd, and the first night we got our sick bivouacked in a Kurd's tent on the river Afrîn. The second day we reached Azass, from whence, as they were proceeding very slowly, I made a run with the interpreter, Yusuf Sáada, to Kilis, the ancient Ciliza, still a goodly town with an old castle.

This Yusuf Sáada had joined the expedition at Port William, and I fear he was not an honest man. Being sent from Balis to procure specie at Aleppo, he said on his return that he had been robbed of the same by the

Arabs. He was one of those who were drowned at the loss of the 'Tigris,' and his body was one of the first recovered. On returning to Azass, I found Charlewood and Fitzjames there, superintending the removal of heavy weights, but the extemporised ambulance had gone on, and I overtook it the same evening at the village of Māh-wurt.

From Azass we advanced upon the great plain of North Syria, which, at a mean elevation of 1,300 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, is almost everywhere fertile, and is cultivated by a mixed population of Arabs, Kurds, and Syrians, whose numerous villages are scattered in every direction, and are generally marked by the presence of a tell or mound of debris indicative of an ancient site. The plain, unlike the valley of Antioch, which is so beautifully wooded, being very cold in winter, has few or no trees.

On the second day of our advance over the plain we crossed the river Koweik by a bridge carried over the river at a point where it is very narrow, not above fifty feet in width, and very deep. It expands to over a hundred feet in width in other parts of the plain. This river has its sources in the hilly ranges north of Kilis and Aintab, and is formed by the junction of two streams, the larger of which is known as the Balükli Sū or Fish River.

The Koweik winds in a southerly direction, some forty miles through the district of Ailan, to the gardens on the western side of Aleppo, thence it follows a tortuous course past the ruins of Kinnisrīn, the ancient

Chalcis ad Belum. It then sweeps eastwards along the foot of the basaltic range known as the Jebel el Sis, beyond which it is lost in the lake and marshes of el Malik or Melak.

There can be no doubt but that this river represents the Chalus of Xenophon, but it was forded at a point where it was a hundred feet in width, and is described by the Athenian historian as full of 'large tame fish.' The distances agree, and from the depth of the water when confined in a channel of fifty feet, it would be impossible to ford it except at a point where it expands considerably. The hypercriticism of commentators suggested a difficulty in this identification, for it was found that the old traveller Rauwolf had reported that there was a scarcity of fish at Aleppo. (Forster in *Geographical Dissertation in Spelman's Xenophon*, p. 206.) This objection would have been avoided had the excellent work of Dr. Russell on the 'Natural History of Aleppo' been consulted. The fact is that the river abounds in fish, and its main tributary is, as we have seen, called the 'Fish River.'

We stopped the same night at el Beyli, or the 'Bey's village,' the next day at Hajji Wully, and the 30th reached Azass el Arab on the river Sajūr. This river rises in the hilly region between Aıntab and Rum Kalah, receives a branch from Arül, flows past Tel Khalid, receives a westerly affluent called Keraskat and another coming eastwards from Tel Izan, passes Azass el Arab, and flows into the Euphrates near the village of Sarisat, the ancient Ceciliana, in five small branches constituting as many islands. Viscount Pollington ascer-

tained that this river abounded in fish, but he properly doubted its identity with the Chalus.

The following day we reached Kütchük Koi, or the 'little village,' and on December 2 we crossed the Kerzīn by a dilapidated bridge. This rivulet is formed by the junction of two insignificant streams, one of which flows from the hills above Nizar, whilst the other, coming from the hills beyond, waters the village and plain of Nīzīb—the scene of the battle between the Turks and the Egyptians in 1839.

We reached Port William the same afternoon, and our reception was rather lugubrious. The men did not appear to relish the rather melancholy appearance of the ambulance, which had also often excited the curiosity of the natives on the road.

The sick were, however, soon disposed of. The Messrs. Staunton had converted all the substantial buildings within the precincts of the station, with the exception of the mess-room, into hospitals and a habitation for themselves, which was, however, found to be so convenient that Estcourt got a corner in it.

All who were well were left to manage for themselves, and a motley scene resulted. Some found shelter in tents, others under light sheds, and a party of tars had made a home by turning a raft upside down. Murphy and Thomson had taken up their abode in the observatory, where a pendulum was swung, and Colonel Chesney had sought refuge on board the 'Euphrates' steamer, already in an advanced state towards completion, and where I was happy to join him. The Colonel had been very ill, over-fatigue and exertion, and still

more the vexation of spirit brought about by the long delays in the transport, had contributed to add to the severity of the fever of the country.

On the 16th there was a sharp frost, and after that the weather alternated between rain, snow, and frost. The interior of the station was converted into a mass of mud and slush. Ague became under these circumstances more rife than ever, and to the scientific party—Murphy, Thomson, and myself—who had to take it night about to count the vibrations of the pendulum, the weather and the tedious employment became very trying indeed.

It is difficult to conceive the labour which the transport of the material of the Expedition had entailed. Not to mention the bullocks, 841 camels and 160 mules had been at work at the same time.

Gul Bashi—the head of the lake of Antioch, where the station had once been—was now inundated and under water. The boilers of the ‘Tigris’ had to be warped out of this dismal swamp by manual labour. The diving-bell was only found by feeling for it with a long pole, and it was perseveringly rolled under water for nearly half a mile before it could be tilted on a waggon. The heavy weights now also stuck in the mud, and the waggons had at times to be lifted out of the mire by hand-jacks, so that progress was sometimes limited to a rate of about a hundred yards in the day. Under this emergency, the system of bringing on a number of the heavy weights at the same time was abandoned, and one was brought on at a time with all the draught power at our command.



The day when the last of the heavy weights arrived at Port William was one of general rejoicing. The British ensign floated on a mast, and banners were hoisted on its muddy entrenchments, as the long train of horses and the gallant band of persevering officers and men arrived within its precincts, and with many a shout and halloo of encouragement to the sorely tried animals, the ponderous waggon creaked through the narrow gateway. A hearty cheer hailed this happy termination to a most difficult and trying undertaking, which stands to the present day without a parallel in the history of exploratory expeditions.



## *BOOK II.—WINTER WANDERINGS.*

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE FOOT OF TAURUS.

THE incomplete state of the steamers—the ‘Tigris’ being still on the stocks—and the necessity there was for awaiting the freshes of spring to insure success in the descent of the river, made Colonel Chesney resolve upon a winter expedition of reconnaissance in Taurus. The weather had now settled down to bright frost, the land was buried in snow, and a journey in mountain air promised to be beneficial to all parties.

On arriving at Port William I found an addition had been made to the original party in Dr. Helfer, an Austrian by birth, and his wife. Being an accomplished naturalist, Colonel Chesney had generously offered him a passage down the river.

The learned doctor had many of the peculiarities of his countrymen. He was at once secretive and stubborn. The second day of my advent he took me to see a cave in limestone rock on the banks of the river a little below Port William. Looking round, I exclaimed, ‘Oh! here is a vein of gypsum in the limestone!’ It turned out

then that I had been conducted to the spot to see if I should perceive the vein.

Another day, I was out walking with the doctor and his wife, when picking up some familiar insects, and naming them as I did so, 'Tiens!' said madame, as if quite taken aback, to her husband, 'mais il s'y connaît!'

The party which was formed to explore Taurus consisted of the Colonel, Murphy, Thomson, the younger Staunton, Helfer, and myself. When the horses were paraded in front of the mess-room for a start, Dr. Helfer was dissatisfied with the appearance of the steed allotted to him, and absolutely declined to proceed. Upon this I offered him the one intended for myself, and I had reason afterwards to be gratified by the exchange.

Our start, however, was not a successful one. It might indeed be said to have foreshadowed the great feature of these winter wanderings, in which one mistake was pretty constantly followed by another. The commissariat, of which Malta was the chief and the spirit, being long in loading, it was left to follow, under the guidance of Yusuf Sáada. Evening approaching, and there being no signs of its coming up, Staunton started (I was excused, being supposed to be the worst mounted of the party), with the view to bring up the tardy eatables; but we did not see him afterwards, nor the creature comforts, till we got to Aıntab.

We were, however, all roused by the zest of travel, and our spirits were raised by the prospect of change and adventure; but this did not prevent our perceiving that night was setting in cold and forbidding, and

made us glad to take refuge in a small village on the hill side, nearly buried in a snow-drift.

We were kindly received by the villagers, and if, owing to the absence of the commissariat, the fare was not choice, it was more than compensated for by the abundant logs of wood, which afforded a wide and genial expanse of flame, limited in its extent by no tyrannical bars, but nearly filling up the whole of a fireplace as capacious as a small room.

The keen sharp frost of the night and the mountain air made all rise in better health; and we started in high spirits, the snow sparkling in the morning sunshine, towards a bare, bleak, and barren range of hills, without a tree or a hut to diversify the prospect. A starved donkey which we passed on the road was being feasted upon by a crowd of vultures. They were scarcely disturbed by our presence, merely gathering together on a neighbouring knoll, where they stood looking at us like a group of schoolboys—only more fierce than playful.

Having, with some little labour and the occasional plunging of some of the least wary into snow-drifts, surmounted the hills, the rest of our ride was downwards, till afternoon brought us into the more cheerful precincts of the town of Aıntab. A lofty and spacious old castle was here seen towering over a considerable expanse of habitations, which with the surrounding gardens nearly filled up a hollow in the hills some four or five miles in circumference, and the smoke curling up in wreaths into the sky, glittering with frosty particles, was so inviting as to render the minor incon-

veniences of frozen hair and icicled moustaches, with occasional masses of snow tumbling on us from overhanging branches, things of no concern.

It so happened that there was an Armenian in Aıntab, who had been long engaged in supplying Port William with vegetables, and we repaired accordingly to his house, not however without some little difficulty in finding our way—difficulties which were increased by the state of the streets, Dr. Helfer sustaining a severe fall from his horse tumbling down an accumulated pile of snow. As luck would have it, I was on his horse. At Khāwājā Yiorgiós, or ‘Gentleman George’ (Khāwājā really means ‘soup-eater,’ but it is applied by the Muhammadans to Christians who are well-to-do), Oriental decorum unfortunately took the place of comfort, and instead of the blazing logs of the previous night, we had to wait till a showy mangal was brought in—a shallow copper dish, in which charcoal was piled and had to be lighted out of doors, whilst we suffered within, having nothing but hope to keep us warm.

Our habitual conceptions with regard to Western Asia have reference almost invariably to the warm seasons, a fine climate, and a burning hot sun. So it is a fine climate, for nothing can possibly be more refreshing than the extremes of heat and cold—a glowing fruitful summer, relieved by a river-binding winter, but this latter is far severer than anything we are accustomed to. On the present occasion, while detained at Aıntab by the necessary astronomical observations, the thermometer fell on the morning of January 16, 1836, as low as 5° of Fahrenheit, or 27° below freezing point. Never did I

feel the exposure attendant upon assisting in taking morning sights so severely. Yet this was not equal to what I experienced at Angora in 1838, when the thermometer fell to 3° of Fahrenheit. On the uplands of Armenia the cold is still more intense.

Awed by the severity of the frost, and appalled by the prospect of advancing further into Taurus at such a season, some began laying in additional garments, of which furs (cheap and excellent here) formed no small part.

But it was worse with Dr. Helfer. He actually declined proceeding any further, and returning to Port William; he afterwards made an excursion in the milder regions of Chalcidene south of Aleppo, to which I have before had occasion to refer, where he made some interesting discoveries.

The worthy doctor had since he joined the Expedition invested a certain number of piastres in a Damascus blade of the first water, encased in the usual black scabbard, having a slit down a portion of the back to allow of the curved blade being rapidly extracted from the sheath.

This formidable weapon was carried more as a precaution than as a means of offence. It was a necessary part of an officer's costume, and was worn to strike terror into the beholder.

It had also an advantage over the long British sword, that it was not, as with Mr. Rassam, perpetually getting between his legs, throwing him off his balance at the most inopportune moments, when he was enforcing with great dignity some demand upon a governor, or walking with due gravity into the presence of a pasha.

The sword was not then often withdrawn from its rhinoceros hide; but being urged one day to allow it to be seen, when drawn out of its hiding place, it turned out that some wily Arab had at one of our resting places appropriated the valuable Damascus blade, and had put in its place an old iron hoop, riveted in the middle into the form of a sword, and with a handle alone similar to the original.

Aintab is a considerable town, with a population of some 15,000 souls. The houses are built of stone, and it is well provided. It has been identified with Antiochia ad Taurum, Mr. Long remarks, without sufficient reason, and yet it is difficult to imagine another positioning for that town. D'Anville, however, is completely in the wrong in recognising it as the site of Deba. This was a city of Mesopotamia on the Tigris, and is a mediæval corruption of Zabda—the Bezabde of the Romans, now Jezireh ibn Omar.

It was, however, known in after times by the name of Doliche, having the same signification as its present name, 'Hot Springs,' and placed by the Tables on the road from Nicopolis to Zeugma, and twenty-one Roman miles from the latter. Doliche was also in mediæval times a Christian episcopate of the province of Euphratensis, and it is still a town much favoured by Armenians and Syro-Greeks, who constitute a large proportion of the population, and contribute most by their industry to its prosperity. We were not, for some reason or other, allowed to explore its castle.

The frost had in no degree abated when we started from Aintab. Our road lay westward, over hill and



valley, alike clothed in the same monotonous garb of white, and the rivers were stopped in their course by thick-ribbed ice. Travelling, however, was by no means unpleasant; the sky was clear, and there were none of those fogs and damps which so often interfere with the wintry beauty of our own climate.

Unfortunately my ague had returned in Giorgio's uncomfortable quarters, and so great was the pain in my loins, that I was at times obliged to seek relief by getting down and holding on by the tail of my horse. But luck had given me a docile creature that thought it too much trouble to kick.

We were somewhat surprised at meeting a caravan of camels. The 'ship of the desert' seemed rather out of its place, but the snow bore its broad padded feet, and it appeared to get on as well as on sand. After all, the camel in its original habitat—the plains of Mongolia—must have plenty of snow.

The first day we reached the village of Kara Weyū, a corruption of Kara Wiran, 'Black ruins,' and by distances most probably the site of Gerbedissus.

There remained then a very long day's ride to reach Kilis. We plodded on as usual, Murphy taking the bearings and the commissariat bringing up the rear, till evening came on apace, and yet there were no signs of the vicinity of a town.

Colonel Chesney thought that, under the circumstances, as the party would be late, it would be better that we should go on and obtain quarters for the others. So getting Murphy to change his more serviceable nag for mine, we started off together.

The distance was, however, far greater than we had anticipated. After an hour or two's fast trotting over an elevated plain, we came to a country of rugged basaltic rocks, upon which the snow only lay in patches. The track which had hitherto guided us was consequently less distinct. We could only see that our road turned into a ravine, which brought us, just as night was coming on, into a dark and dense forest, the way through which was just visible.

As we advanced into the wood, trunks of trees began to jut out into the narrow track, which was also further obstructed by fallen trees and jutting crags of rock. Still, on and on the Colonel sped, and I kept up in the rear, for two could not ride abreast, as well as I could. But all in a moment the pattering of the horse's feet in front ceased, and I heard a bump. Hastening up, I found the gallant Colonel crouching amid rock and timber, but luckily he was not hurt, and being assisted to remount, he soon sped on as determinedly as ever. But the pattering of the horses' feet roused the attention of the jackals. At first two or three, apparently highly delighted at our nocturnal progress, joined in the fun, yelling gloriously. This, however, brought others, till the pack became so numerous that the clash of the horses' feet became no longer audible. This incessant din and howling, and the careering pace which the beasts kept up, now in the track of our horses, now sweeping along by our sides, gave additional speed to the poor steeds, whose very hairs stood up like bristles. They probably anticipated a catastrophe, when they would have pounced upon the unfortunate fallen one ;

but they were doomed to disappointment, and they only made our entrance into Kilis a triumphal progress. I have since—travelling tatar—had nocturnal rides far more fearful.

It was late when we arrived, and almost everyone had retired to rest, but luckily we found a youth who at first tried to hide himself behind a Mussulman's tomb, and he was forced, *nolens volens*, to act as a guide to the house of a Christian merchant who had relations with the Expedition. The remainder of the party did not arrive till near daybreak, desperately fatigued and hungry, and grumbling audibly; so the Colonel and I deemed it wisest to continue fast asleep.

Kilis, to which I had previously made a cursory visit, is a large bustling town, on a rich and fertile plain, backed by precipitous cliffs of crumbling marls and limestones, alternating with basaltic ridges. It is said to contain thirty-two mosques. Its houses are built of stone, and the population is roughly estimated at 12,000, chiefly Turcomans, Kurds, Armenians, and Syro-Greeks, with a few Osmanlis.

Its bazaars are well stored and its market good. Kilis and Aıntab have both manufactures of leather, dyed red and yellow, as also of cottons and woollens. These may be considered to be their chief industries, but Aıntab, as previously observed, abounds in fruit and vegetables, with which it supplies the market of Aleppo, while around Kilis, although much cotton is grown, and it has also extensive olive plantations, there are not such productive gardens. These two towns, situated as they are at the head of the great plains of

North Syria and at the foot of Taurus, are, however, the market towns for the numerous villages scattered over the plains, as well as in the hilly districts beyond. In return for their produce, they import English and French manufactures from Aleppo for the bazaars, and these are thus distributed over the country.

Kilis corresponds to the ancient Ciliza—a place which appears to have been of little importance till it succeeded to Cyrrhus, the capital of the district, and which town stood in its immediate neighbourhood. We did not visit the ruins, but they are described by Colonel Chesney, who explored them on a former occasion, to be of an interesting character, and situate about sixteen miles NW. by W. of Kilis.

It is remarkable that the site of these ruins is still called Kūrūs by the natives, which would so far corroborate the opinion held by the early Christians, that Cyrrhus was founded by the Jews and derived its name from their liberator Cyrus, as related by Procopius ('De Ædific.', ii. xi.), and by Gennadius ('De Script. Ecclesiast.', cap. 89). The general opinion of antiquity appears, however, to have been, that it was named after a city of the same denomination in Macedonia. Cyrrhus was the country of Avidius Cassius who rebelled against Mark Antony. It was also a Christian episcopate, and it gave its name to the Roman province of Cyrrhestica.

From Kilis we advanced into a hilly and wooded country, the upper valley of the Kara Sū, which flows into the lake of Antioch, and rendered pleasant and picturesque by its various wooded scenery. Colonel

Chesney's intention was to cross the Amanus by its central pass, and thus save the *détour* by Baylan, but this we were not able to accomplish.

We stumbled upon the largest of the feline tribe we had yet met with in these coverts. We arrived so suddenly upon its lair, that it had not time to steal away without our obtaining a full view of its noble proportions and spotted fur. It was unquestionably a panther, called by the natives *nimer*, for which Amanus has ever been celebrated. There may be some doubts as to whether the *Amana* alluded to in the Song of Solomon (iv. 8): 'Look from the top of *Amana*, from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards,' refers to the Amanus of the Greeks and Romans, for the scene, as *Bochart* remarks, of the sacred drama was confined to the mountains of *Judæa*. But there can be no doubt of this being the mountain whence *Cicero* (2 *Epist.* ii.) said it was his intention, while in *Cilicia*, to obtain from the hunters panthers for the Roman exhibitions. The mountain was indeed celebrated in all antiquity for its wild beasts. *Valerius Flaccus*, in the first book of the '*Argonauts*,' describes the hunting of tigers in Amanus, and *Oppianus* ('*Cyneget.*,' lib. iii.) describes the same mountain as frequented by a kind of wolf, with bosom of enormous dimensions, thick hairs, and lips of brass; (brown). And from poetry not without a basis in fact to fact itself, the naturalist *Ælian* ('*De Animal.*,' v. c. 26) describes the panthers of Syria as being bred in the heights of Amanus. We met numbers shortly afterwards, to the west of the mountain.

Our ride was this day as long and fatiguing as others. The clouds came down towards sunset and enveloped us in a dense snow-storm, which rendered everything within a few yards from us quite invisible. We had ascended some wooded heights, which broke off to the right in abrupt precipices, while to the left they led away apparently into a forest of boundless extent. Thus we had to make our way, afraid in the darkness of the storm to advance further into the wood on one side or tumble over the precipice on the other. Night overtook us in this predicament, and we had begun to pass over in our minds the necessity of a bivouac, when we were aroused by the sound of barking dogs, and shortly afterwards open land announced industry and the approach to habitations. Nor was it long before we arrived at the gateway of what appeared in the gloom as a castellated mansion, which beetled over the brow of a precipice. The owner of this mansion was unfortunately absent, but we were hospitably received, and welcomed into a roomy apartment where blazing logs of wood soon made us forget the fatigues of the day and the anxieties of a few moments past.

These mansions in the hilly districts, belonging to large land-proprietors, are constructed of mud and sun-dried bricks. They mostly have an interior court with galleries, but not always so. All, however, have a most spacious reception room, magnificent indeed in its proportions, and where guests of all kinds and degrees are hospitably entertained. Examined by daylight they have a crumbling, ruinous aspect, but at night-

time, when the faults of detail are not perceptible, they have a truly baronial aspect.

An hour or two's ride brought us the ensuing day to where the character of the country began to change. Valleys with a central line of reeds and rushes, indicating the existence of watercourses, opened into the greater valley of the Kara Sū—the ancient *Ænoparas*—here some five or six miles in width, and abruptly limited to the west by the steep acclivities of *Amanus*.

At the termination of one of these lateral valleys where it opened upon the plain, we perceived a village cresting a tell or mound of debris, and we directed our steps towards it, hoping to find a guide to the pass over the mountains. Little, however, did we anticipate the reception that awaited us. The natives had watched our approach down the hills with anxiety, and arming themselves with their long muskets, quietly awaited our arrival, seated in the front of a large white house, the residence of the Sheikh.

We had just arrived at the foot of the tell, and become exposed by turning round a clump of trees which had hitherto masked us, when they opened an irregular fire, which caused us to stop suddenly, and ponder as to what was next to be done.

We all felt that it was some egregious mistake, but how to remedy it was the question. It was suggested that to disarm their hostility Yusuf Sáada should ride up alone, but Yusuf did not or could not be brought to see the wisdom of such a line of proceeding. As there was no time to be lost, we rode up, as if by impulse, with our fowling-pieces in hand, to rectify the

mistake. Our absent-minded astronomer was taking bearings of the Sheikh's house with his compass at the time when the Sheikh's followers were taking bearings at him with their muskets. At length he awoke to a sense of the position we were all placed in, and putting up his compass he unslung his fowling-piece and came up to us at a canter.

Rushing in thus from four or five different points simultaneously, we took the little group on the hill by surprise, and they at once gave in without a gun being fired on our side.

It can easily be imagined to what ludicrous explanations our arrival in the village gave birth. It appeared, as we wore fezzes, that we had been mistaken for emissaries of Ibrahim Pasha's, with whom the Sheikh was in open hostility. The village was, we found, called Kara Baba, or the 'Black Chieftain's'; and so delighted were they to find that we were harmless travellers, that their hospitality knew no bounds.

Nay, the next day, the Black Chief, in the excess of his satisfaction, would allow no one to act as a guide but himself, and in the absence of a horse, he walked away with us, with the haughty dignity which never deserts an Oriental, even when placed in a humiliating position.

Crossing the plain of the *Ænoparas*, woody and fertile, but everywhere uncultivated, we were conducted by the Black Chieftain to the village of *Ādā Būrnū*, situated at the foot of *Amanus*. We were here received in another large stone house or mansion, belonging to a Kurd bey.



This house had the usual grand hall or living room, which in this instance had arched recesses or compartments so capacious that one of them sufficed for our party to sleep in, while the bey and his family occupied another.

To the Colonel's anxious inquiries as to whether there was a way hence across the mountains, the answer was clear and decisive, that there was no such thing. 'Not even for birds,' was the emphatic expression used. Indeed, it only required to look out from the terrace of the chieftain's house at the mountains which rose up like a wall before us, so perpendicular as scarcely to afford footing to a mountain goat, clad with a slippery mantle of snow and ice, and which towered up, almost without a break, to the region of clouds, to feel at once that this was a natural obstacle not to be overcome by any amount of intrepidity at this season of the year.

There was no alternative, then, but to start next morning, taking a southerly course along the foot of the mountains to the pass of Baylan, and skirting the old castle of Baylan Bostandeh, previously noticed, we arrived the same night at the ancient town which occupies the crest of the pass.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE GATES OF CILICIA AND SYRIA.

THE change on descending the next day from the rude country we had been travelling in to the mild shores of the Mediterranean and the fertile soil of Cilicia was very great. There was not a flake of snow upon their ever verdant plains and groves, and oranges and pomegranates still hung ungathered upon the trees.

Passing Alexandretta, where Captain Hayes had succeeded as vice-consul to M. Martinelli, we advanced by the Cilician and Syrian Gates to Bayas, and from thence to the banks of the Pinarus, where, having entered upon a new country, we proposed to ourselves to examine the great field of battle more in detail than had been done during the previous survey of the Gulf of Issus.

We found several streams of water coming down at what may be called the north-east corner of the gulf. The most southerly was called Yuzler, after the village of same name, and it might almost be supposed to be an Oriental rendering of Issus—as Issus must on its side have been a classical rendering of an Oriental appellation. The next in succession was the Koï Chaye or ‘stream of the village,’ and the third was the Deli Chaye or ‘mad (or turbulent) river,’ and which

must hence be supposed to correspond to the ancient Pinarus.

ποταμῶν  
Τηλόθεν ἀρχομένων Πυράμοιό τε καὶ Πινάριοι.

curiously rendered by Avienus :

Sulcant duo flumina terram ;  
Pyramus hic undas, hic volvit Pinarus æquor.

The rivulet of Bayas, which so many have identified with the Pinarus, would hardly have been placed in juxtaposition with the Pyramus.

Although there are no ruins of any importance in the present day in the neighbourhood, still at Yuzler, Koï Chaye, and the other village, there existed abundant remains of antiquity. Hewn stones, fragments of columns and of friezes, &c., were strewn about, dovetailed into modern houses, or made to ornament Muhammadan cemeteries.

Yuzler has indeed been already identified with Issus from the relationship of names; an identification which would be militated against if we admitted with Cellarius, that when Arrian describes Darius as first taking Issus, and then proceeding next day to Pinarus, he was retrograding, to take up his position previous to giving battle.

But this view of the subject is contradicted by the simple language of the Nicomedian, as well also by the statement of Strabo (a dweller in the neighbourhood), who places Issus after Ægea, and then the Pinarus.

The distances given by Xenophon are also to the same effect. The army of Cyrus marched in two days

fifteen parasangs, or thirty-five geographical miles, from the Pyramus to Issus, and from that site, in one march, five parasangs, or fifteen geographical miles, to the Gates of Cilicia and Syria. These distances would place Issus northward of the Deli Chaye.

We explored the course of the Deli Chaye for some distance, and were tempted further by the sight of a tell upon which we sought for traces, but without finding any, of the Altars of Alexander, which according to Q. Curtius (iii. c. 12) were erected on the banks of the Pinarus, close by where the battle was fought, but according to Pliny, between Amanus and Rhosus.

The Colonel and the rest of the party had in the meantime gone on northwards, and as Murphy and Thomson had commenced a round of bearings with the theodolite from the summit of the tell, and evening was coming on, I tried to join the others by riding across the plain in a transverse direction.

But I soon found the plain to be intersected by deep narrow ravines or watercourses, with perpendicular sides, which obliged me to ride a long distance before a feasible passage could be found. It was thus dark before I came to a village where I found the party lodged in a pleasant cottage in a garden.

Murphy and Thomson, who were doomed to bad luck, and never dreamt of the difficulties that lay in their way, did not come in till the next morning.

The day following we passed a large village, with orange trees with the fruit ripe on the branches, called Urzin, and we turned thence in a north-westerly direction across a tract clad with shrubs and heather,

towards some ruins which rose up out of the plain in the distance.

Staunton and I had a sharp run across this plain after a badger ; but with our sorry steeds, he got to his hole before we could get a shot at him.

When we arrived at the ruins we found that they occupied a space of about a square geographical mile, at the foot of some basaltic hills. The buildings were in consequence all constructed of the same stone which had imparted to them their durability, but at the same time gave to them a most sombre and uninviting appearance.

Besides the walls of the city, which were still standing in part, and the numerous remains of dwelling-houses, the ruins of a temple were also visible, and the acropolis occupied an elevated and central position. Outside of the town, there were also the remains of an aqueduct with a double row of arches.

About two miles southward of these ruins, and in the lower part of the plain, was a tell, still bearing upon its summit fragmentary remains of a castellated building, while ruins of dwelling-houses and other edifices were scattered around.

In the absence of better data, such as local inscriptions, there are many reasons for believing that the largest of these ruined sites represented Epiphanæa ; a town of some importance in Roman times, and one of those to which Pompey consigned the piratical prisoners whom he had captured at sea, and which afterwards became a Christian episcopate.

The lesser ruins appear to represent the Castabala

of the Antonine Itinerary, placed at a distance of twenty-six miles from Baiæ, now Bayas.

Cicero (xv. Epist. 4) describes himself, when advancing upon Amanus, as occupying the castle which was near to Epiphanæa before he ascended into the mountains—a description which would tally closely with the relative position of the castle and of the town or city.

In his further progress he reduced six different strongholds, among which were Sephyra, Commorin, and Erana. The first is evidently a misreading for Gephyra, ‘a bridge,’ on the Deli Chaye, the second was apparently the same as Canamella, now Bayas Kalehsi, and the third, described as a town situated upon the crest of Amanus, was apparently the same as Pictanus or Baylan. Further countenance is lent to these identifications by the hill-forts, as they are called, being described as situated in that part of Amanus under the roots of which were the Altars of Alexander. This would add to the points of identification of the said altars with the ruins at the Gates of Cilicia and Syria.

Epiphanæa appears also at one time to have been called Nicopolis, a town which is described as being situated at the point whence the road started which led across the northern or Darius pass of the Amanus. Cicero (in lib. v. ‘ad Attic.,’ Epist. 20) further describes the castle occupied by him previous to his invasion of Amanus as being that which Alexander held near Issus to keep Darius in check. And this would apply to either Epiphanæa or to Castabala.

M. Victor Langlois, in his admirable and ex-

haustive work, 'Voyage dans la Cilicie,' identifies Epiphanæa with Myriandrus (p. 470). But the testimony of Xenophon and of the historians of Alexander is utterly opposed to such an identification. Arrian distinctly says that having passed the castle above the Gates, the Macedonians came to Myriandrus. Pliny (v. xxii.) notices Myriandrus as being on the shore between Rhosus (Arsūs) and the Syrian Gates. The site in fact anticipated that of Alexandretta. M. Victor Langlois also identifies some ruins which he describes as being situated in the Jebel en Nūr, or Mountain of Light, some nine or ten miles from Ayas (of which latter place he gives the most detailed account extant) with Castabala. But in the Antonine Itinerary we find Catabolon, as it is there written, 26 Roman miles from 'Ægas' and 16 Roman miles from Baïæ. The latter distance alone testifies to the position now advocated.

Leaving Epiphanæa and Castabala, we joined the high road nearer to the sea, and found it to be in part marked out by a narrow causeway which formerly brought town and castle in communication with the Cyclopean arch known as the Gates of Amanus.

Passing a small Turcoman encampment, the Sheikh mounted his horse, and to do us honour, careered before us, throwing his jerid, and performing various equestrian feats. Passing a little rivulet, called Burnuz Sū, the Colonel shot a duck. I saw it fall into the reeds, but as we could not find it, the Turcoman did not believe in the fact.

Close by the Cyclopean arch were ruins of a station now called Matak, and Strabo states that the Amanian

Gates had a station connected with them. This archway the Turcomans call *Demir Kapū*, or 'Iron Gate,' and *Kara Kapū*, 'Black Gate,' but it is designated, in the Itinerary from Constantinople to Mekka, as *Taimūr Kapū*, or 'the gate of Tamerlane.'

Ascending the hills we passed the village of *Kurk-Kulak*, or 'the Wolf's Ear' where there is a large ruinous khan, and whence we descended into a plain or valley about three miles in width called *Chūkūr Ovah*, or 'the valley of the ditch.'

This khan, which appears to have been erected upon the site of the ancient *Tardaquiæa*, is described by M. Victor Langlois as being erected by *El Rhamadan Oghlū* in the fifteenth century, and he further describes it as having been three miles in extent! He also calls it *Kurd Kalah*, or 'Wolf's Castle.' This *Rhamadan Oghlū*, a Turcoman chieftain (and to the present day they are as tenacious of the *Oghlū* or 'son of,' as the Hebrews were of their *Ben* and the Slavonians, Poles, and Russians are of an equivalent termination to their names), was a chieftain of great public spirit, and no end of mosques, khans, and public fountains bear his name in Cilicia.

As the *Chūkūr Ovah* was clad with a deep cover, mainly of tall grasses, Colonel Chesney let the remainder of the party go on to *Missis*, whilst, accompanied by *Staunton* and myself, he went to see what game there was in such a likely spot. We saw flocks of small bustards and some gazelles, but what took us most by surprise was that in the course of beating the cover we roused no less than six panthers from their lairs. A futile attempt was made to follow some of them in the



stealthy retreat ; the horses especially did not approve of such proceedings, and the Colonel having dismounted in the endeavour to get a good shot, his steed bolted, and we had great difficulty in recovering it.

This valley was separated from that of the Pyramus by a rocky prolongation of the 'Mountain of Light,' which advances here into the great plain of Cilicia Campestris, bearing apparently upon its last crag the ruins of a mediæval castle. This castle, which is called in the 'Jihan Numa' (p. 623), Shah Mirân Kalahsi, or the 'King of the Serpents' Castle' was found, however, afterwards to be separated by the Pyramus from the Jebel en Nûr. M. Victor Langlois identified it with the Thila of Willebrand, and it is the same as is noticed by Semped, in his 'Chronicles of the Kingdom of Armenia,' under the name of Thil, as being one of the fiefs depending upon the crown at Sis. Its modern name is associated with a legend that it was once the residence of a chieftain of such evil repute that he was described as being half man half serpent, but who came to an untimely end, having been killed at Tarsus in an attempt made to carry off the daughter of the 'king' of that city.

We rejoined the rest of the party at Missis, where they had established themselves in comfortable quarters in the house of an Armenian. The ruins of the ancient town of Mopsuestia, or as it is more correctly written by Strabo, Mopsi-Hestia, 'the abode of Mopsus,' once a celebrated soothsayer, is approached by a bridge of nine arches which is ornamented with two cippi, on one of which is an inscription to the memory of a legionary of the xvth, long in garrison in Cilicia.

This bridge is of great antiquity, for it is described by Procopius as having been repaired by Justinian. It was almost destroyed in 1737 by a flood, and afterwards repaired, but in 1832, when the Turks, defeated at Baylan by Ibrahim Pasha, were retreating before the victorious Egyptians, they destroyed one of the arches in order the better to insure their safety.

Time, successive invasions, internal discords, and the apathy of Muhammadan rule, have not only deprived Mopsuestia of all its ancient importance, but have also brought about the destruction of the numerous monuments, Greek, Roman, and Armenian, with which it was once adorned.

There still remain, however, sufficient relics to attest to its former importance. To the westward columns are met with barely a yard in height which mark the site of the temple erected by Philocles to the sun-god, one of the divinities of the Triad worshipped at Tarsus.

The various titles which the emperors bestowed upon the city are recorded in an inscription published by Cellarius and Gruter; and M. Langlois discovered an inscription in the Armenian cemetery dedicated to Titus Elius, benefactor of Hadriana Mopsuestia.

Like other cities anxious to flatter their successive conquerors, Mopsuestia was for a time known as Seleucia ('*Revue Numismatique*, 1854), but it resumed its ancient appellation upon its conquest by the Romans. It was not till the time of Hadrian that it took his name, as it did also that of Trajan Deces, after whom it was called Decia.

The remains of a palace, first noticed by Otter, are still to be seen bearing traces of having been burnt by fire ; as also of a Roman bath—the hypocausts of which are still visible.

A paved causeway led from Mopsuestia to Anazarba, close by which are also the remains of an aqueduct. In the same direction sepulchral grottoes are met with, and M. Langlois found in the same neighbourhood a milestone bearing an inscription to the effect that Alexander Severus, returning from fighting the Parthians, had repaired the causeway. Victor Langlois also recovered a considerable number of funereal inscriptions both in the Armenian and Turcoman cemeteries and houses, some of the more remarkable of which are published in his work (pp. 453 *et seq.*). The most interesting of these is one dedicated by G. Julius Leonides, Athenian, soldier in the xvth Flavian legion, to the ‘infernai gods,’ and to his parents.

In the middle ages, almost all the Byzantine historians, the chroniclers of the crusades, and the Arabian and Armenian writers make mention of Mopsuestia, and no wonder, when we consider that along the highway by the Cilician, Amanian, and Syrian Gates (until our own time so little studied in detail), most of the invading armies of old and of mediæval times passed to or fro, and that Mopsuestia, with its bridge on the Pyramus, stood in their way. And the names of the place underwent as many changes as the place itself, for it was known at one period as Mopsistea, at another as Mampsysta, and so on through Mamysta, Masista, Mamistra, and Mamista, to Missis—the name

given to it by the Saracens, and which remains to it to this day.

It sustained a long siege against Nicephoras Phocas and John Zimisces before it succumbed. The gates were carried away after the capture of the place, and sent to Constantinople as trophies of the victory. William of Tyre tells us that even in his time Mopsuestia was one of the most important cities in Cilicia, and that it was surrounded by a good wall.

It was before the walls of Missis that the sanguinary battle between the crusaders of Baldwin and the followers of Tancred took place, and which is related at length by Michaud in his '*Hist. des Croisades*' t. i. pp. 130 *et seq.*). But as the description involves no new points of topography, it need not be entered into here.

Willebrand, canon of Oldenburg, tells us in his '*Itinerary*,' that in his time (the thirteenth century), Manistra, as he calls it, was still a goodly town, with walls flanked by towers, but in a dilapidated condition. The castle was at that time occupied by a Byzantine garrison, whilst the town belonged to Leon II., the first king of the Rupenian Armenian dynasty.

The possession of the citadel was for a long time a matter of dispute between the Greeks and the Armenians. It was taken and retaken several times, until at last the Greeks abandoned it during the reign of one of the last of the Rupenian dynasty.

Bélon, who visited Mopsuestia in the sixteenth century, describes it, under the name of Cæsarea, as a ruinous place which constituted the boundary of the dominions

of the Sultans of Egypt and of Turkey, and also the point where the Arabic language was succeeded by the Turkish. If an attempt was made to establish such a distinction in the present day, it would be at the pass of Baylan, but Turkish officials are scattered all over Syria and Mesopotamia.

The ruins belonging to the middle ages still extant at Missis are few in number. The most important are those of the castle, which crown an eminence on the eastern or other side of the river. Although Missis was an episcopacy, no traces of churches are to be met with. Yet it is well known that even the Venetians had a church and houses at Mamistra ('*Lib. Pactor.*,' *Arch. of Venice*, ii. 6). Even the Armenians of the present day have only a private place of meeting.

Nor are the relics that belong to the era of the Mussulmans of much greater interest. The chief is the khan of Kaffirbina, so called from its being built by infidel merchants in the year 949 of the Hejra, as a relay on the route from Asia Minor to Syria. It was, however, repaired by the Turcoman, Hassan Pasha Oghlū, in 1830, as is recorded by an inscription over the portals.

The mosques of Missis are all in a ruinous condition, and the minarets have fallen down. The muezzin, however, still calls the faithful together from the top of the walls of the chief mosque, the Oghlū Jami of the Turcomans. At the present time Missis contains about 150 houses, two-thirds of which are tenanted by Mussulmans, one-third by Armenians. In the eighteenth century the town still occupied the two sides of the river. Now it

is limited to the west side, and the other is called Kaffirbina from its old khan.

M. V. Langlois says, 'Paul Lucas, Otter, Kinneir, and Ainsworth make no mention of the ruins of the middle ages still to be seen at Missis' (p. 460). But the learned archæologist had before him only the account of my visit made in 1839 ('Travels in Asia Minor &c.') Excepting some brief notices in 'Ainsworth's Magazine' (vol. vi., 1844), I have published no account of what was done on the occasion of the Euphrates Expedition in 1835. Nor was it deemed advisable, in passing through Missis in 1839, to refer to what occurred in 1835.

I am at the same time only too happy to acknowledge the many and valuable additions made to our knowledge of mediæval remains in Cilicia by the author of the '*Voyage dans la Cilicie*,' and have gladly availed myself of the same to make additions to my previous researches. As it is, I would sum up the gates of Cilicia in the simplest possible terms, as :

First (coming from Asia Minor). The Gate of Taurus, now the Kulek Boghaz, or 'Narrow pass.'

Secondly. The Gate of Amanus, now Kara Kapū or Taīmūr Kapū, 'the Black or ruinous gate,' or 'the Gate of Tamerlane.'

Thirdly. The Gate of Cilicia, now the Sakal Tutan, or 'Jonas's pillars.'

Fourthly. The Gate of Syria, now the pass of Baylan.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE ALËIAN PLAIN.

FROM Missis we advanced upon the beautiful and expansive plain of Cilicia Campestris, better known in antiquity as the Campus Alëius :

Κεῖθι δὲ τὸ πεδίον τὸ 'Αλῆϊον.

and where Bellerophon wandered—

Forsook by Heaven, forsaking human kind,  
Wide o'er th' Alëian field he chose to stray,  
A long, forlorn, uncomfortable way.

Avienus renders the myth borrowed from the 'Periegesis' of Dionysius, as

Hic cespes late producit Alëius arva.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt, as is attested by all antiquity, and as has since been shown by marbles brought home by Mr. Fellowes, that it was in Lycia that Bellerophon first tamed the Chimæra, and with the assistance of his wonderful and winged steed Pegasus, brought over woods and rocks and volcanic fire, as typified by lion, goat, and dragon, to cultivation ; but it appears equally

<sup>1</sup> v. 1036.

certain that Cilicia became also a field for his civilising labours.

Besides the testimony to this effect borne by Homer and Dionysius, there exists a tradition, noticed by the last mentioned, as to the origin of the name of Tarsus, which may be freely rendered :

Tortuous Cydnus, through Tarsus' centre flowing,  
Well built Tarsus ; where once most truly Pegasus  
Placed its foot ; leaving it thus a name. There 'twas  
That Jupiter caused the fall of Bellerophon.

The fall of Bellerophon here alluded to is not contained in Apollodorus nor in all the versions of the legend, but it is met with in Pindar, with the addition of Pegasus having been stung by a gad-fly, and it is hinted at by Horace :

Et exemplum grave præbet ales  
Pegasus, terrenum equitem gravatus  
Bellerophontem.

It is, in fact, only another way of relating, as the father of poetry does, that the mythological hero—but possibly real benefactor of mankind—was in trouble or in a fallen condition when in Cilicia.

Xenophon speaks in high terms of the large and beautiful plains of Cilicia, 'well watered, and full of all sorts of trees and vines, abounding in sesame, panic, millet, wheat and barley.'

There is still a good deal of cultivation on the plain, but much of it is clad with herbage, interspersed with a few shrubs, and here and there a solitary locust tree. To grow alone on a plain seems to be as characteristic of this tree as of the more gigantic plane to be



generally met with, two or three at the most, at or near a fountain. But the latter incident may be looked upon as arising from the tree being respected as affording shelter to the wayfarer. Wild pear and apple trees also generally grow apart from other trees. Bustards herd upon this plain in flocks of myriads, and the traveller can scarcely ever cross it without seeing troops of gazelles which can here bid defiance to the wily panthers.

It was across this plain that Philotas is described as leading the horse to *Ægea*, while Alexander proceeded to *Mallus*.

It was a short and pleasant ride from *Mopsuestia* across this fertile plain to the large and prosperous city of *Adana*—now the chief town of *Cilicia* and the residence of the Pasha.

Colonel Chesney and myself had as usual ridden on in front, in order to procure lodgings, and for that purpose I waited on the Pasha, who referred me to the civil governor, politely sending a *kawas* with me to back the request. The Governor in his turn sent a *kawas* to obtain a domicile in the Christian quarter, but not a house would open its doors, and we were compelled to accept the hospitality of a French medical gentleman who had but one room at his disposal. On our way thither, we met the disconsolate astronomical and gastronomical part of the expedition, wandering in uncertainty about the narrow, winding, and thickly populated streets, not at all pleased at the jeers and insults which Mussulmans are ever ready to bestow upon Christians. I had occasion, a few years afterwards, to suffer myself from the churlish, bantering spirit of

the populace of Adana. The fact is, that it is a large and populous place, and wherever that is the case, there are evil-disposed people.

Victor Langlois, however, charges both myself and General Chesney with having been misled by our informants as to the population of the city. From details obtained, he puts down the number of houses inhabited by Turks and Arabs as 2,800, by Armenians 900, by Armenian neophytes 80, by Greeks 60, by Ansarians 600, by Syrian Jacobites 55, and by Europeans 5,—making a total of 4,500 houses, or a population of about 22,500; but the population of houses in the East generally far exceeds that of the usual five adopted for an estimate.

We entered Adana by the handsome bridge over the Seihün (ancient Sarus), which we found to be at this point 325 feet in width. The walls still exist, but in a ruinous condition, at the entrance of the bridge, of an old castle which once defended its approaches. Langlois gives to it a Byzantine origin, and adds that after the sieges by Bajazet II. in 1485 (who however repaired it) and in 1488 by the Sultan of Egypt, who overthrew everything, it is surprising to see in what good condition the basis of the fortress still remains. The cemeteries of Adana stretch far away on the plain beyond, like a forest of graves.

Three of the mosques of Adana date back to the middle ages. One of them, called the Eski Jami, or ‘old mosque,’ was, according to Kinneir, an old Christian church dedicated to St. James; another, the Oghlū-Jami, was built by the son of Rhamadan Oghlū, and a

third was erected by Piri Pasha, a descendant of Rhamadan. These two last on the authority of the 'Itinerary to Mekka' and the 'Jihān Numa.' There are also nine mosques in the city which belong to more modern times, and having for the most part elegant and graceful minarets.

The Christians have also their churches—fairly handsome buildings; two belong to the Armenians and one to the Greeks. The cathedral church of the Armenians is dedicated to the Virgin, the other to St. Stephen. Langlois discovered among other manuscripts in the cathedral, a copy of the Gospel that belonged to a Baron Geoffroy (Jofré), in the time of the Armenian king Hethoum, A.D. 1245.

The Greek church is remarkable for containing a slab of white marble forming part of the altar, upon which is a metrical inscription attributing the construction of the aqueduct of Adana to one Auxentius. This inscription stood in the time of Paul Lucas upon the aqueduct itself, and its translation is given at length by Langlois (p. 347).

The bazaars are extensive, and comprise a bezistan, which the same traveller compares with those of Constantinople and Smyrna. The Pasha's palace is a vast parallelogram situated on the banks of the Sarus, and its interior has been described by the Princess Belgiojoso in her 'Travels in the East.'

There are four hamams or public baths in Adana; the houses are chiefly constructed of bricks, or of tiles after the Roman fashion, and some of them have a goodly aspect.

Adana is further surrounded by gardens which produce most of the fruits and vegetables of extra-tropical climates. There are date trees and vineyards, and the luscious wines of Cyprus (*vin de Commanderie*) are to be obtained in the bazaars. The castor-oil plant is grown as an object of trade, and when Ibrahim Pasha was in possession of the place, he tried to introduce the cultivation of cotton and sugar, but with what success I do not know. The climate is very hot in summer, and hence like Tarsus it is very unhealthy in autumn, and those who can afford to do so, run away to the mountains.

Although by no means so celebrated as Tarsus—the birthplace of St. Paul, and seat of an Academy of which Strabo was an ornament—Adana boasts of a remote antiquity, so much so, indeed, that it was fabled by Stephanus to have received its name from ‘Adanos, son of Heaven and Earth.’

However this may be, it is certain that it is mentioned as far back as the times of the expedition of Cyrus and that of the wars of Mithridates.

In fact, owing to the peculiarities of the configuration of the country, the line of road marked by the Gate of Taurus (Kulak Boghaz) and the Gates of Cilicia and Syria (the pass of Baylan), has, from the times of Cyrus to those of Ibrahim Pasha, ever been the route of invading or defending armies. There have been slight diversions from the road, as when Alexander sent part of his forces through the straits of Cilicia Trachæa or Aspera, and when Pompey invaded the coast in a fleet of galleys, but with these exceptions, it

has been from all times the chief and only road from Sardis to Babylon, from Byzantium to Jerusalem, and from Constantinople to Mekka. That road comprised Adana, Missis, Issus, Myriandrus (succeeded by Alexandretta), and the Baylan pass. Langlois would, however, carry it to Tarsus, whence it bifurcated upon several passes into Asia Minor.

Be this as it may, Adana has had to succumb to the many reverses of fortune which have attended upon all sites of antiquity, of the middle ages, and of modern times that have had the misfortune to be placed upon this debatable highway.

The Seleucids, established in Syria after the death of Alexander, looked upon Cilicia as a province of that country, and Antiochus Epiphanes, engaged in suppressing revolts at Mallus and Tarsus, conferred upon Adana the title of Antioch on the Sarus. Tarsus became at the same epoch Antioch on the Cydnus, and Mallus, Maritime Antioch.

The city is said to have received a great impulse in its prosperity by the foundation of colonies in Cilicia by Pompey—Adana being among the favoured spots selected, and constituted as a central station.

During the civil wars that followed upon the death of Cæsar, the Tarsiots, being in favour of Cassius, assaulted Adana, but Cassius made them pay heavily for the outrage.

The Emperor Hadrian embellished the city and gave to it his name, but this was supplanted by that of Maximian, granted to it by the Roman Senate. The Isaurians

are also credited with having several times ravaged the place in search of booty and plunder.

Reduced to such a condition of decline that it became designated as a mere *koma* or village in the time of the Low Empire, it must by its own resources have rapidly risen again, for we find the historians of the crusades speaking of it as a large city, well fortified, with abundance of arms and provisions.

There is a hiatus in the history of Adana as given here. The place must have been reduced by the followers of Muhammad long before its conquest by the Ottomans. I find in my notes that in the time of the Khalifate, the renowned Harūn al Rāshīd took a fancy to this place and embellished it, as did also his son Muhammad. We must refer to the conquest of the place by the Seljukian Turks of Koniye the permanence of Turcoman ascendancy in the province.

It is probable that Adana attained its highest degree of prosperity under the Rupenian kings of Armenia. Adana was to them one of their chief places, and they could not do otherwise than contribute to the prosperity of their cities.

The Ottoman Turks also contributed in an indirect way to its opulence. Under Bajazet II. they constituted it the chief place of the province, and assigning to it the seat of government to the detriment of Tarsus, which lost with the rank it occupied all the advantages which it had enjoyed previous to the Ottoman conquest.

The plains of Cilicia Campestris are watered by three rivers—the Pyramus, the Sarus, and the Cydnus. The Pyramus and the Sarus were designated by the Muham-

madans respectively the Jaihūn and the Saihūn after the two great rivers of Central Asia—the Oxus and the Jaxartes (Aba-l-fada, i. 63). The Pyramus is remarkable for having frequently changed its course, as also for the great quantity of alluvium it carries down to the sea, upon which it is ever encroaching. Strabo makes mention of an oracle which predicted that :

Pyramus from age to age advancing more and more,  
Will some day reach Cyprus' sacred shore.

or as Gosselin renders it :

Le Pyrame, à la côte ajoutant d'âge en âge,  
De Cypre quelque jour atteindra le rivage.

Writers both of ancient and of mediæval times have shown that the Sarus and the Pyramus have at times united to flow into the sea, and then again have separated to flow by distinct mouths. Thus Mallus, which Langlois places at Karatash, where Beaufort placed Megarus, stood once upon the Pyramus. Langlois has drawn up the following interesting table of the different periods in the history of the Pyramus and the Sarus :

Four centuries and a half B.C. (in the time of Xenophon)	
the mouths were . . . . .	distinct
Four centuries B.C (Scylax) . . . . .	united
First and second centuries after Christ (Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy) . . . . .	distinct
Two centuries after Christ (Denis Periegetes) . . . . .	united
Three centuries after Christ (Avienus) . . . . .	"
In the sixth century (Procopius) . . . . .	distinct
In the eleventh century (Cedrenus) . . . . .	united
In the twelfth century (Anna Comnena) . . . . .	"
In the fourteenth century (Abulfeda) . . . . .	"
In the fifteenth century (Barbaro) . . . . .	"
In the nineteenth century . . . . .	distinct

M. Langlois makes a curious slip of the pen in his excellent work. At page 355 he says, 'Ainsworth assures us that the Saihūn is open to navigation by boats as far as Anazarba; a statement which information obtained on the spot enables me to confirm.' What he meant was the Jaihūn. The Saihūn does not water the plains of Sis and Anazarba. At page 463 the mistake is rectified: speaking of the Jaihūn, he says, 'Ainsworth tells us that it is navigable up to Anazarba.'

The Sarus was at one time called Sinarus. Xenophon called it Psaros; Stephanus wrote Saron. It is described as being a navigable river in the time of Justinian, but that was when the two rivers were united. It is, however, still navigated by boats, which coming from Mersineh, the port of Tarsus, ascend the river to obtain fruits and vegetables.

The Cydnus appears in olden times to have flowed through Tarsus. In the time of Justinian it flooded the city, and the Emperor had a canal dug to prevent these overflows (Procopius, 'De Ædif.,' v. 5). The first who describes the river as no longer flowing through the city, is Barbaro, who wrote in the fifteenth century. The Cydnus is more of a mountain stream than the Pyramus and the Sarus, and it tumbles over a wall of rock, not far from the city of Tarsus.<sup>1</sup> But what between canals and a naturally low position, the country around the

<sup>1</sup> The deep waters formed by this cascade, which is some twelve to fifteen yards in height, but which sickness prevented me determining its geological character and features, is traditionally connected with a bath taken by Alexander which brought about that illness which his doctor Philip alone prevented being mortal. It was much more likely that he simply caught the fever of the country.



town is full of watercourses and marshes, which render the place very unhealthy.

Yet the waters of the Cydnus were renowned in antiquity for their purity and even remedial virtues. Pliny and Vitruvius both credited them with curing gout.

The quantity of alluvium brought down by the river has, as we have seen, caused many changes to have taken place at its embouchure. Anastasius, in his life of St. Sylvester, quoted by Langlois, notices an island called Cordiana, from Gordys, who followed his father Triptolemus to Cilicia in search of Io. This, like Melibœa on the Orontes, has disappeared, or rather become part of the mainland. So also with regard to the island of Elæusa, noticed by Oppian ('Cyneget.,' iii. 8. 6). Strabo notices a large lake or lagoon as existing near Rhegma, now part of the great marsh that extends from the mouth of the Pyramus to that of the Sarus.

The port of Tarsus was in the time of Edrisi ('Geogr.,' iv. 5) called Arlas. The modern port of Mersineh is said to be situated on the ruins of Zephyrium—a name given to several places along the coast when favoured by sea breezes. Mersineh is now so called from the myrtles that abound in the neighbourhood.

M. Gilet, French consul at Tarsus, discovered sarcophagi and other relics of antiquity near this site, and Langlois makes mention of a magnificent carob tree protected by a wall, as in the same neighbourhood. This tree, dedicated to St. George, is sacred to Christians and Muhammadans alike. Langlois discovered close by it a marble slab with the saint on horseback and a

monogram of his name. The Direkli-Tash, an hour distant from Mersineh, is a still more curious monolith, like those in use by the Hebrews, the Gallo-Greeks, and the Scythians or Kelts. Langlois adds descriptions of several castles, mainly of the Byzantine era, the ruins of which are still to be seen on the flanks of Taurus in the same neighbourhood.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE BIRTHPLACE OF ST. PAUL.

A PLEASANT ride of a few hours took us across what remained of the Alëian plain to Tarsus, renowned in antiquity as the rival of, and according to Strabo, surpassing Athens and Alexandria in its schools of philosophy and science, and endeared to Christians as the birthplace of the Apostle Paul.

As we approached the broad valley of the Cydnus, we found ourselves in the midst of jungle and brushwood intermingled with trees, and gradually merging into a marshy forest, through which the road was almost impassable, except where there occurred at rare intervals the remains of an ancient causeway. Tarsus lay in the midst of this forest, from out of which its mosques and dwelling-houses rose here and there with a small extent of gardens, reclaimed from wood and water.

Colonel Chesney and I had ridden on in advance to secure quarters, to obtain which we addressed ourselves, in the absence of an English consul (two had perished there within the period of a very few years), to the French consulate.

M. Gilet, the representative of France, and a distin-

guished archæologist, at once, and with the greatest civility offered us the accommodation of his house—a comfortable and convenient villa, with an open balcony.

We had not, however, been long seated, before the Colonel hinted apprehensions as to how the rest of the party were getting on.

‘*Comment donc ?*’ exclaimed Madame Gilet, ‘*est-ce qu’il y a des autres ?*’ ‘Yes, there are two more in the rear,’ was the answer given with some trepidation; and our kind hostess rose to make preparations accordingly.

The ice had, however, been broken for them, and they arrived just in time to sit down to a quasi-European dinner, washed down with French wines to boot.

M. Gilet was, like most of the French consuls in the East, a person of far superior education and refinement to the class of persons who generally fill the position of vice-consuls as representatives of this country in the Levant. He was at once a scholar and an able and zealous archæologist, and he was most favourably placed to pursue his enlightened studies. Madame did not, however, appear to quite sympathise with these researches. They involved expense. Perchance she might have preferred the British skipper vice-consul, ever filling his pockets with piastres by his mercantile pursuits. And in a worldly point of view she was right. But life is short, and men do not leave a name to be looked up to and respected, or to be handed down in the future records of research, who are devoted solely to the acquirement of wealth.

Tarsus and its environs present, indeed, an inexhaustible field of inquiry to the historian and the

antiquary. The Tarshish of the Hebrews, it was also the Toursis of the Egyptians, as is recorded in a monument of the victories of Rhamses III. The Greeks attributed its origin to the Pelasgians under Triptolemus, but by a later tradition to Perseus.

Be this as it may, it is certain that Sardanapalus I., driven from his capital by the rebellion of his satraps, sought refuge here, and embellished the place. The most ancient and the most remarkable monument still existing at Tarsus is known as the Dunuk Tash—a vast solid parallelogram of masonry.

This monument has attracted the attention of all travellers, and M. Gilet made endeavours, not without some success, to penetrate into the interior, and M. Langlois has placed on record a minute detail of its structure and dimensions.

The last comer criticises the opinions of his predecessors, and these opinions as to the nature and character of the monument have been most various in all except one point; the generality of travellers and archæologists have agreed in looking upon it as sepulchral.

Admitting, as M. Langlois does, the identity of Tarsus and Anchiale, it would suffice that Strabo (a resident in the place) and Arrian should have placed the monument dedicated to Sardanapalus near the walls of that city to determine its meaning. That monument bore an Assyrian inscription preserved both by the Greeks and Romans. Cicero thus rendered it :

*Hæc habeo quæ edi, quæque exsaturata libido  
Hauserat ; at illa jacent multa, et præclara relictæ.*

Upon which Aristotle is reported to have said, 'What more appropriate could have been inscribed on the tomb of an ox?' Strabo, and he must have known, says that a statue once adorned the mausoleum, the fingers of the right hand expressing contempt for all things worldly by an action of a more expressive than dignified character.

Burckhardt Barker is described by M. Langlois as objecting to the identification of this cenotaph, with that of Sardanapalus, as the latter was cremated at Nineveh. But it was not so. The passage in the 'Lares and Penates, or Cilicia and its Governors' (p. 16) is to the following effect: 'The fact that Sardanapalus was really buried on this spot would seem to contradict the accounts of other writers of celebrity who assert that he burned himself in his palace in the city of Nineveh, with all his household and treasure.'

M. Langlois has, however, cleared up this latter difficulty by pointing out that the Sardanapalus who destroyed himself was a second of the name, not the first, who was buried at Tarsus.

The Assyrian monarch was indeed worshipped in Tarsus, and the anniversary of his death was an occasion for the celebration of public rites. Dion ('Chry.,' p. 407) assimilates Sardanapalus to the Assyrian Hercules, and he was as much the hero of the primitive religion of Asia as Perseus was of the Greeks. Both, according to Langlois, were confounded with Bacchus or a bearded Apollo, represented on the Imperial medals of Tarsus, so that the Hellenic traditions as to the origin of Tarsus are confounded in their monuments, as also in their ancient authors, with Oriental legends. Hence that multiplicity

of religions and forms of worship which are so difficult to unravel.

‘It is, however, in this marvellous and complicated system,’ M. Guigniaut remarks in his ‘Religions de l’Antiquité’ (iv. 2, 5, *et seq.*), ‘that can be discerned the mysterious chain which gathers together all the threads, and which connects with the religions that emanated from the depths of the East the popular forms of worship and the religious system of countries nearer to ourselves.’

The great necropolis of Tarsus—known as the Gueuzluk-Kalah, is one vast mound of relics, mainly of pottery of the Roman and Byzantine eras. But with these are some that belong to the time of the Greeks, distinguishable by their artistic superiority. Most of these potteries represent the Tarsiot-pantheon Jupiter, Hercules, Apollo, Minerva, and the city of Tarsus, but with them are to be found figures of Egyptian deities, as Mithra and Harpocrates.

We are indebted to Mr. Burckhardt Barker for the first archæological exploration of this vast mound ; the results of which were published in his ‘Lares and Penates’ before alluded to. But since that time M. Langlois, assisted by M. Mazoillier, French vice-consul at Tarsus, have made further excavations, the result of which has been the discovery of a vast mass of most interesting objects of antiquity—potteries, statuettes, funereal deities, urns, vases, lamps, pottery of Samos, brooches, medals, &c., &c. Mr. Barker’s finds are at the British Museum, those of M. Langlois are consigned to the museum of the Louvre.

The castle of Tarsus belongs to the Byzantine era, but the foundations are of Roman construction. Tancred floated the banner of the crusaders upon its loftiest tower in 1097, when he had captured the place from the Turks. It was almost destroyed by an explosion of powder in the time of Ibrahim Pasha.

There is also a gateway belonging to the same epoch, called Khandji-Kapū or 'the gate of the khan keeper,' in the construction of which materials of more ancient times were used.

I must not omit mention of the gymnasium of the Romans, the ruins of which are still to be seen on the eastern slopes of the Gueuzluk-Kalah. Kinneir described them in his 'Travels,' and they remain, although the inhabitants have made free use of the materials (stone at the basis, and pebbles in cement as at the Dunuk Tash at the top) in pretty nearly the same condition as they were in the time of the before mentioned traveller.

The stadium lay to the north of the gymnasium, upon a plain that is now cultivated. Paul Lucas, Belley, Bimard, Boeckh, and others have given publicity to an inscription recording that this playground, devoted to young people, was completed by Lucius Eutropius, one of the governors of Tarsus in the times of the Emperors. M. Langlois failed to discover the site of the tomb of Julian, which Jovian is said to have erected to his memory, and which has been confounded with the tomb of Sardanapalus.

Leon II., king of Lesser Armenia, and his successors repaired the walls of the city, and built palaces and churches—most of the latter of which have been con-



verted into mosques. This is particularly the case with the church of St. Peter and St. Sophia, which is supposed to have been replaced by Rhamadan Oghlū's Jami.

In a city so celebrated as the birthplace of St. Paul, or 'Saul the Tarsiot' (Acts of the Apostles, ix. 11), there are, as might be expected, many reminiscences of the apostle. The church of the Virgin was, according to Armenian legends, erected by St. Paul himself subsequently to his conversion, and upon the occasion of the two different journeys which he made to Tarsus (Acts ix. 30; xi. 25; xv. 41). Paul Lucas makes mention of a stone upon which Christ sat when he washed the feet of his apostles. But Langlois says this stone is an Armenian tomb, dating A.D. 1535. A carob tree of vast size in the Armenian cemetery is also called that of St. Paul, but it is not supposed to be over 150 years in age.

The most illustrious of the apostles was descended from a Jewish family of repute, belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, of pure and unmixed blood, and adhering to the ancient traditions of their people (Phil. iii. 5). His father, like St. Paul himself, was of the strictest sect of the Jews—a Pharisee (Acts xxiii. 6), and a Hebrew, in contradistinction to the Hellenistic Jews, who adopted alike the Grecian language and Grecian manners.

He was a freeman enjoying the rights of Roman citizenship, a personal distinction probably conferred upon him on account of service rendered to some Roman of influence, not being necessarily involved in

residence in a free city. This circumstance would seem to imply that his father was in respectable circumstances. The fact that the future apostle was instructed in the trade of a tent-maker is in no degree opposed to such a supposition, since it was the wise custom among the Jews that all boys should learn a trade. It has been suggested with much probability, that his father traded in the tents made of goat's hair which formed a branch of Cilician commerce. It is certain that he was nurtured in so strict an observance of the Mosaic institutions, that he was able to describe his conduct before his conversion as being 'touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless' (Phil. iii. 6).

The church dedicated to St. Paul in Tarsus is in the present day a mosque admitted to be Kilisa Jami, or the mosque of the church. It is said to have been founded by King Ochin between 1308 and 1320, and to have been converted in the reign of Leon VI. of Lusignan. Hugues the Great, Duke of Vermandois, was, according to the chroniclers of the crusades, buried in this church.

There are six mosques in Tarsus. The Oghlū Jami occupies the first rank, not only by its superiority in construction but also by its antiquity, dating back to the fifteenth century. Yet, as we have before seen, it was raised upon the foundations of the more ancient church of St. Peter and of St. Sophia.

Next comes the Kilisa Jami, which in the same way superseded an Armenian church. Then the Makam Jami, which Paul Lucas said contained the tomb of the

prophet Daniel,<sup>1</sup> and the Yeni Jami and the Takti-minar, or mosque with a wooden minaret. The Kirwan-Serais, or caravanserais, the khans, and the hammams or baths, belong all to modern epochs, with the exception of the Eski Hammam or 'old hamman,' which according to a legend which refers to Lokman, to whom Muhammad dedicated one of the chapters of the Kuran, dates from old Muhammadan times.

The grotto designated as that of the Seven Sleepers is situated some three hours' journey (eleven to twelve miles) to the north-west of Tarsus, on an isolated rock. Unfortunately, upon the day appointed to visit this grotto I was so bad with ague that I could not join the rest of the party. But, as Langlois justly remarks, of the three grottoes to which the well-known legend of the Seven Sleepers has been attached—that of M'gaouse in Algeria, that of Tarsus, and that of Ephesus—there can be no question but that the latter has the best claims to originality.

The legend is said to have had its origin in a tradition that in the time of the Emperor Trajan Deces, seven brothers—Maximinian, Emilian, Martinian, Denys, John, Antony, and Constantin—in the service of the Emperor, declared themselves to be converts to Christianity. The Emperor accordingly ordered that they must be put to death.

To carry this verdict into effect, they were walled

<sup>1</sup> Paul Lucas was a very credulous traveller. He makes mention of a portrait of the Virgin in the church of St. Peter and St. Sophia, so beautiful that it seemed as if painted by angels, and which (the portrait) shed tears whenever any calamity was about to befall the city.

into a grotto in which they had sought refuge, but God permitted that they should sleep until the time of Theodosius the younger, when the persecutions against Christians ceased.

The Mussulmans have also their own tradition connected with the grotto. It relates that seven giants who came forth from the castle of Nemrūn in order to deliver a message of defiance to the King of Tarsus, having been imprisoned in this grotto, were miraculously sent to sleep and did not wake up until two centuries had elapsed.

Certain it is that the grotto is still a place of pilgrimage among Christians and Muhammadans alike, and there are a dilapidated mosque and a few habitations devoted to the reception of pilgrims in its vicinity.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE GATE OF TAURUS.

FROM Tarsus we advanced into the wooded and hilly districts on the southern slopes of that part of Taurus which is known as the Bulghar Tagh. We ascended at first over low, undulating, and naked hills of snow-white gypsum, followed by open, grassy, but uncultivated valleys. The second range was higher, wooded in parts, and more cultivated, with a few villages. The third range, still in an ascending series, was composed of sandstone, which was very remarkable for being divided into polygonal masses, like a tessellated pavement upon a gigantic scale, and even still more so from containing vast numbers of large fossil oysters, mostly from twelve to eighteen inches in breadth, and thus over a yard in circumference, and of great weight. I should have much liked to have preserved a specimen, but they were too heavy to carry.

Passing several villages of Turcomans we arrived at a fourth and more extensive hilly district, on the summit of which stood a Roman arch, fragments of a sarcophagus, and traces of a causeway which led from Tarsus to the Gate of Taurus.

M. Langlois, who travelled by the valley of the

Cydnus, describes the lower country as dotted with Byzantine and Armenian remains, amongst which is the village of Manaz, one of the few localities in Cilicia the old name of which has survived the Muhammadan conquest. There are about forty houses in the village and the ruins of several churches, one of which, built in the style of the ancient *basilicas*, is so handsome that M. Langlois has given a sketch of it. Some sarcophagi found in the neighbourhood indicate that Manaz dates back to Roman or Byzantine times.

Beyond the Roman arch, the country assumed a more Alpine character. The valleys were narrower, and broken up by rounded hills, some of which bore remains of castellated buildings on their summits, but were wooded, while naked rocks and cliffs towered up in places into perpendicular precipices, several hundred feet in height, the crags at the top being dotted with sturdy pine trees which broke the monotony of the wide-spreading snow.

We soon found ourselves involved in this broken country in a narrow and picturesque pass, having nearly perpendicular cliffs on our left hand, in which numerous sepulchral grottoes had been hewn, many with inscriptions. Hence is this place known to the natives as Mezarluk, or 'the place of tombs.'

We passed the night at the village of Bostanluk, situated in a wood upon the hill side.

The next day the baggage was sent down the valley of the rivulet which flows out of the Kulak Boghaz or 'narrow strait,' as the Gate of Taurus is called, with strict injunctions to await us at the first khan met with

on the high road, whilst we ourselves proceeded to visit the lead mines, the works at which had lately been resumed, under the direction of Ibrahim Pasha, by M. Boriani, a Piedmontese superintendent. The worthy expert was, however, very anxious that I should see that there was nothing but slag and refuse of ancient works, and that what little galena was to be found was so highly sulphuretted as to be of no commercial value, in order that I might back his reports as to the inutility of spending money in re-opening exhausted mines.

We did not visit the old Armenian castle of Nemrûn, which lay to our left, and which bears a high repute for strength and magnitude, as also for the beauty and healthfulness of its mountain position, among the natives. Hence is it an habitual place of resort for the more wealthy Tarsiots and people of Adana in the autumn months, and Mr. Barker, who has described the place in his 'Lares and Penates' (p. 115) as the castle of Nimrod, says, 'Even the poor man will sell anything he may possess, rather than fail to take his family to the mountain during the summer months.' Each habitation has its own garden, with vines or fruit trees, and hence this delightful yaila, or 'summer home,' covers a considerable space of ground.

M. Langlois, who also visited the place, describes these cottages as being situated at the foot of the rock bearing the old castle, the approach to which is rendered difficult by being cut out of the rock. Five successive arcades of imposing dimensions have also to be passed before reaching the interior. The great height of these arcades is what has led to the popular

tradition which is related by Paul Lucas ('Voyage, i. 353-364) that the place was built by giants, and to its popular name, the castle of Nimrod.

This pathway coils, serpent-like, along the western side of the mountain, which is defended on all other sides by precipitous rocks, surmounted by walls. At the entrance are two figures of heraldic lions, with two crosses on one stem, as are seen on some coins of the kings of Armenia, principally of Leon II., Hethoun I., and Leon III.

The castle itself consists of square towers and an oblong edifice divided into three compartments, on a platform of rock. There is also a pretty octagonal tower, which once served as a chapel, to the south-west of the fortress.

Nemrūn, or Nimrod, whose Armenian name was Lampron, was a stronghold of considerable importance during the Armenian domination in Cilicia. Abelgharib, Prince of Tarsus, gave it in 1070 to Ochin, his companion in arms, and who had accompanied him in the descent from Greater Armenia into Lesser Armenia. The descendants of Ochin constituted a dynasty called the Hethounion, which was for a long time in rivalry with the Rupenian dynasty, whose sovereignty they refused to acknowledge, but which ultimately submitted to the latter, whose stronghold was at Sis in the time of Hethoun I. St. Nerses or Narsis, surnamed Lampronatzi, son of Ochin, and archbishop of Tarsus, was born in this place in the twelfth century. This personage played an important part in the ecclesiastical history of Armenia. His name is found in the chronicles of the



crusaders, especially in the country of Edessa, where some villages still bear his name.

M. Boriani conducted us over the hills by the foot of a height which bears an ancient castle, that once commanded the pass below. The height is called the Kalah Tagh, and the castle the Kulek Kalahsi, or 'castle of the pass'; but it was known in the time of the Armenians as Goulag, and was the residence of an officer in charge of the Gate of Taurus. It was also once the repair of a leader of Turcoman banditti—one Tchapan-oglü—who was the terror of the country. Dr. Kotschy, an eminent botanist, ascended to the castle, and found that it had once been a fortress of considerable extent, of which only part of the wall and six towers remain ('Reise in den Cilicischen Taurus über Tarsus'). It constitutes by its lofty position a very remarkable object when seen from a distance, for it cannot be seen from the defile itself. Under such circumstances the narrow gate of Taurus, and its castle on the summit of a high rock, constitute one of the most picturesque objects to be met with in Lesser Asia. We did not upon this occasion advance beyond the narrowest part of the defile, a little beyond which were the formidable defences erected by Ibrahim Pasha, at that time garrisoned, but now dismantled.

I, however, passed through the whole length of the gate—the Tauri Pylas, as Cicero has it in the fifth book of his Epistles, to Atticus (xx.). I may then as well mention here, that after passing the fortifications a wide and open plain or plateau presents itself in the midst of the high mountains which constitute

the mass of this part of Taurus, known as the Bulghar Tagh.

This plateau descends to the north-west by a valley with a rivulet, which again opens into the principal valley known as that of the Bosanti Sū, and in which is a khan, according to the 'Mekka Itinerary' (p. 19), built by Rhamazan-Oglū; but it is known as the khan of Bosanti—the Butrenti of the crusaders.

The river of Bosanti flows into one of the chief tributaries to the Sarus, which here forces its way through a deep and narrow gorge in the mountains. These are here designated as the Allah Tepessi to the west, and the Annacha Tagh to the east. This latter mountain is crowned by an old castle called the Annacha Kalahsi; and the 'Mekka Itinerary' describes it as the Douleh or residence of government. It was the Podandus of antiquity, and the Bodendron of the Itineraries and of the crusaders, and Al Mamun the astronomer, son of Harūn al Rāshid, is said to have died here in A.D. 883.

M. Langlois, who explored this castle, describes it as being of great size, and presenting a vast mass of ruins, the walls and towers surrounding which belong to the time of the Low Empire. He also saw, on the face of the rock above the abyss which is dominated by the castle, numerous little crosses cut in the stone by the crusaders, just as we see them on the walls of Antioch.

After a hasty examination of that part of the Gate of Taurus where the rocks are perpendicular and the masses fallen in the stream in the centre, one of which

bears an illegible inscription, whilst on another the name of Hadrian has been deciphered, so block up the narrow passage as to render it a matter of care and caution to get along at all; ('Whosoever does not dread the Boghaz does not fear God' is an expression of the Turcomans); we returned down the beauteous and wooded valley, which carries the waters flowing from the pass to the Sarus. The pretty cyclamen was now blooming in sunny and rocky spots sheltered by evergreen shrubs, whilst the noisy waters stole away beneath a canopy of myrtle, laurel, and prickly oak.

In return for the civility shown to us by M. Boriani, the Colonel invited him to proceed onwards and take pot-luck with us. What this usually consisted of I may take this opportunity of mentioning. Our meals, under Malta's admirable superintendence, were nearly always the same, and yet we did not tire of them. They consisted of about the fourth part of a goat or sheep, which we generally purchased from the villagers, thus laying in four or five breakfasts and dinners in advance. Both meals, the one served before starting, at about four or five in the morning, the other at the end of the day's journey, were the same. A quarter was cut into fragments, and stewed with dried haricot beans, of a dark colour but excellent eating, and flavoured with an onion or two. Sufficient of this delectable stew was always made up at night that we should have enough to warm up in the morning, and it always proved to be a most satisfactory meal for the day. Bread would have been a pleasant addition, but that is not to be

obtained in the East outside of large towns. In the villages nothing but the gridiron cake is known.

We rode on then in anticipation of the customary repast awaiting us at the first khan we should arrive at on the high road, and evening overtook us, when at length we arrived at an almost roofless and deserted caravanserai. It was in vain that we sought for the commissariat, so we fancied that Malta, dismayed at the comfortless aspect of the place, had gone on further in search of better quarters—or that Yusuf Sáada might have induced him to do so.

We accordingly continued our way down the valley until we came to another khan, but to the utter discomfiture of our prandial prospects, no Malta was visible there. A native was induced by the offer of a small remuneration to go in search of him, but to no purpose.

We had no alternative but to dispose ourselves as best we could, in two lines, along a comfortless mud divan, on the opposite sides of the interior of the caravanserai. The slight glimmer of a small fire in the remote distance just rendered visible the tattered yet turbaned form of the keeper of the khan, who was busy blowing the dying embers into a sufficiently lively condition to boil a few thimblefuls of atrocious coffee, and also afforded an indistinct view of sundry countenances which had in no small degree been lengthened by the unpleasant certainty of a dinnerless and bedless night—for our carpets and cloaks were with the missing baggage.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THREE DAYS LOST IN TAURUS.

THE commissariat came up rather late the next morning—by following a lateral valley it had reached a khan lower down than the one we had spent a supperless night in—so bidding farewell to M. Boriani, to whom we had given so cheerless a reception, we turned off once more up the slopes of Taurus, and from the hill sides a most magnificent prospect lay before us. The view embraced the whole extent of the Cilician plain, its towns and rivers with the sea beyond, Cyprus islanded on its far off bosom and the rock-enclosed Gulf of Issus, skirted by the lofty Amanus, with the isolated snow-clad peak of Mount Casius closing up the Bay of Antioch by the long promontory of Posidium.

We did not make a long journey this day, but arriving at a prettily situated village called Chukakli, probably a vulgarisation of Kutchuk Ali—‘the little Ali’—we made up for our fast of the preceding day and the morning, by partaking of an unusually large kettleful of Malta’s admirable stew.

So refreshed did we feel, and so tempting was the hilly shrubby country around us, that the next morning Colonel Chesney proposed to me that while the horses

were loading and the remainder of the party were equipping for the usual day's journey, we should walk out with our fowling-pieces, and see if we could find any game.

The immediate country around us was better characterised by its vegetation than by any other feature. The hills, in rather monotonous succession, but with beautiful wooded valleys intervening, were uniformly covered with grass and shrubbery—the latter consisting mainly of prickly or evergreen oak, myrtle, juniper, and Christ's thorn. Out of these arose here and there a deciduous oak or a wide-spreading locust tree. When not covered with shrubs, the ground was mainly clad with a little spiny mimosa, the liquorice plant, rest-harrow, and astragalus. Heaths, chiefly *Erica ciliaris*, and ferns or brake, were occasionally met with, but were not as with us characteristic of this sylvan country.

The next intended point of our journey, with daily rests to be determined by circumstances, was the royal city of the Rupenian dynasty and the old Armenian arch-episcopacy of Sis, the exact position of which, in the then little known geography of Northern Cilicia, was only proximately conjectured to be somewhere at the foot of Taurus—a few days' journey to the east, a little north, of our present position.

In the customary absence of roads, Colonel Chesney and myself kept pretty closely to what we considered would be the direction taken by the others. It was not, however, until after beating the hills around for some time, that we became aware that some mistake must

have occurred. In fact, by the time of day, it was quite evident that they had gone by some other line of road. Under these circumstances the Colonel proposed to push forward, with the hopes of intercepting them, or getting sight of them from some eminence on our way. We accordingly went on till we came to a small river, along the banks of which we had to walk some little distance in search of a ford. This was at length found, near an abandoned burial-ground on which were the ruins of a mosque.

Higher up the river some wild ducks were paddling about in undisturbed quiet, and whilst the Colonel made an unsuccessful attempt to approach them unobserved, I ensconced myself behind some stones, endeavouring to get a shot at some curious-looking rodents (they certainly were not common rats) which were here luxuriating over the remains of Muhammadans, and had most likely established a colony here, being a place where they were undisturbed. They were, however, too sharp for me, getting into their holes in a twinkling, and I did not get a specimen of what I believe after all to have been jerboas.

The Colonel having rejoined me we stripped partially, for the river, called the Uurlinjah, a tributary to the Sarus, which comes down from the rocky pass north of the Kulek Boghaz, was rather deep.

On the opposite side we found ourselves in a country of similar character as heretofore—hilly but not rocky—generally wooded, uninhabited, and pathless. At one moment we were ascending a hill to obtain a view of the country before us, and select the line which

appeared most open without deviating from our general direction, which was determined by compass ; at another we were descending into deep vales choked with an almost impenetrable shrubbery, where the armed and pliant branches of the Christ's thorn tore our clothes as we forced our way through the thickets. At times a reprieve was obtained by following the course of some rivulet, whose pebbly bed was here and there decorated with tamarisk and gaudy flowering oleander ; but the head waters of such streamlets were soon reached, the crest of another ridge had to be surmounted, and that only to see another vale and another ridge of wooded heights—like the reflection in a mirror of what had just been passed over—so similar in outline, in elevation, and in vegetation.

We had only met with one partridge during the whole day, and this luckily the Colonel shot. Not a francolin was seen. Game is abundant in some favoured spots in these countries, at others, probably from want of their chosen food or the persecution of wild animals, not to be met with.

We disturbed a few jackals from their unenvied coverts, but no hares, the former probably devouring the latter ; but as evening was coming on, and the snows of the loftier mountains before us were beginning to cool the air, we arrived at the banks of a small stream to which the wild beasts of the forest were coming down to assuage their thirst. We suspected from previous experience that the panther might be among these, so we kept a careful look-out, not, however, without some hopes of meeting a stray gazelle.



The rippling of the crystal stream and the hum of great beetles, that ever and anon struck recklessly against us, were at this moment broken upon by the distant but welcome sound of barking dogs. Our pace quickened, and a momentary exchange of gladdened looks took place.

In about half an hour we reached a small village of herdsmen, situated on a little height above the rivulet, and were kindly received, a room being set apart for us, and an old woman busied herself in making some of the thin scones which take the place of bread. On our part, gathering a few sticks, we managed to make fire sufficient to roast our solitary bird, which was fairly divided into equal shares—half a breast, a wing, and a leg each.

The next morning, when the Colonel awoke me, it was so dark that for a moment I argued the question as to its being daybreak; but I was overruled upon this point, and not being troubled with baggage or by a lengthy toilette, having in default of beds slept in our clothes, we were soon on our way, without troubling the sleeping villagers with any ceremonious adieux.

Notwithstanding the energetic Colonel's asseveration that it was daybreak, we walked two dreary hours before a long line of light on the eastern horizon really announced the break of morn, and at the same time displayed the presence of a tolerably large village in front of us.

Tempted by the prospect of a possible cup of warm coffee to cheer us up, we directed our steps thither, and found a boy just aroused to let out the cattle, and

who pointed out a house as a public *oda* or place of reception.

Walking unceremoniously up a few steps, we opened a door which gave entrance to a large room, at one end of which were the dying embers of a fire, while the raised divan on each side, and even the central space between, were covered with turbaned gentlemen fast asleep, but whom we at once guessed to be kawasses or tax-gatherers, engaged in one of their customary levies of tribute.

We had to step cautiously round one head, and then over another body, before we could reach the fire-side, when putting our fowling-pieces in a corner we began to labour at the revivification of the ashes.

The noise, however, made by our entrance had awakened several of the sleepers, who one after another began to assume a semi-erect position, yawning as they rolled the fallen folds of their turbans round their lazy heads, interchanging at the same time glances of surprise and distrust.

We attempted on our side to be civil and to make explanations, but our stock of Turkish was at that time so very limited that they seemed only to make matters worse, and the savage soldiery more aggressive. I soon observed one of the party who had been sleeping in the middle of the floor, and who, like the rest, carried pistols and a yatagan or khangar in his belt, steal round the stool on which the Colonel had seated himself, and unsheathing his knife, make signs at the Colonel's back, and then to my side of the fire-place. At the same moment the Colonel called out to me in sharp quick

tones to take my fowling-piece, for he had observed the same pantomime going on in my rear.

The call was obeyed with an alacrity equal to the emergency, and in a second's time we were both on our feet, our fowling-pieces in our hands, and our antagonists, taken by surprise and retreating a few steps, we were enabled to clear a way through the room, and gaining the door, were in the lapse of a few minutes on our road again, but without our hoped-for cup of coffee.

Daylight had now really broken; the morning was clear and frosty, and we found ourselves approaching more closely to the rugged wall of lofty mountains that was always by our side. Passing over a few wooded ridges we came to a more open and expansive valley, watered by a tributary to the Sarus, with some cultivation, cottages here and there, and a mansion-like looking residence in the distance. We succeeded, but with some difficulty, in getting near a shepherd, who had fled at our approach, and learnt from him that this was the residence of a Turcoman chief, Melangena Oghlū, whose name we had heard before, as the family have long, both under Osmanli and Egyptian rule, held from the tenure of land and high position among the Turcomans, the governorship of Adana.

Thither, then, we bent our way, and found as usual a building in the shape of a parallelogram, with no windows outside, all the rooms opening into a wide court within, the lower ones apparently devoted to horses and cattle, the upper ones to habitation, and communicating with one another by an outside gallery.

There was only one gateway, and it was only after some demur that we were admitted to a reception room, where a repast of bread, milk, and the sweet juice of the grape were brought to us, after which we were conducted into the presence of the chief, who received us in a talar or open room, courteously enough.

But here our usual misfortune attended upon us, we could not make the dilemma in which we had been involuntarily placed understood. In this awkward position an European, who happened to be on the premises, was sent for, but he turned out to be a Muscovite, and we were as badly off as ever. At length, after vain attempts to procure a guide to Sis, we were obliged to continue our journey as we had done hitherto, by compass.

The morning's walk, after a slight refreshment, was, however, more cheerful than usual. There was some cultivation, an occasional cottage, and for a time a visible road-way. After little more than a couple of hours' walk we came to a village, the Sheikh of which, hearing that we came from Melangena Oghlū's, not only extended his hospitality to a cup of coffee, but actually provided us with a guide to the next village, which stood upon the banks of the chief tributary to the Sarus, here a deep and wide stream, and by far the most important of the tributaries to that river that we had met with since leaving Tarsus.

After a brief delay in ferrying us over the river, we advanced hence into a wooded but uninhabited country, the counterpart of what we had passed through on our

way to Melangena Oghlū's. Our afternoon's walk was long and laborious ; not the less so for having been on foot since two hours before sunrise.

There were not wanting, however, some natural beauties to cheer us on in our progress. The rippling, clear crystal brooks, beneath copses of brilliant oleanders, were at once lovely and refreshing to contemplate. The sleepy hollows of the forest also often revealed pools of water so still, silent, and dark, overshadowed by alders or willows, and watched over by a lone black heron, as to form little pictures of themselves. Then again, from the heights of the occasional hills we had to pass over, the wide expanse of wooded country, uninterrupted by fallow or the curl of cottage smoke, and except when limited by the snow-clad mountain chain, trending away to the extreme verge of the horizon, gave an impression of vastness that in our isolated and lost condition partook almost of the sublime.

The sun was setting on the second day of our long march, the character of the country remained the same, the difficulties of progress without a path, and in dense shrubbery, were in no way diminished, when a village of huts became perceptible in the distance, nearer to the foot of the mountains.

The Colonel, who had been cheering me up with prospects of a hospitable reception at the monastery at Sis, now put it to me if we should push on straight before us, or turn out of our way to the huts. Not particularly caring for a supperless or shelterless night in the jungle,

I gave my vote in favour of the village, which we were not long in reaching.

But it is one thing to approach a Turcoman village on horseback, and another on foot. The dogs came out to meet us with reckless ferocity, nor did the people make the slightest attempt to call them away. Keeping them off with the butt-ends of our fowling-pieces, we succeeded in reaching a hut, which we entered unceremoniously.

The tenants of the hut were not, however, inhospitable. They gave us some milk and bread, and after sixteen hours' walk, we were not long in falling asleep.

Luckily for me the Colonel slept well that night, and did not rouse me until an hour before daybreak, when we started refreshed and vigorous—for light diet and exercise gives health and strength. Our muscles too had become firmer by practice, and we trod the earth with elastic and buoyant steps. What then was our delight when about noon (we must have walked a long spell between daybreak and noon), surmounting a low ridge of hills, we found a wide grassy and level plain stretching before us to the extreme horizon, a river flowing tortuously in its centre, and two or three castellated rocks in the distance.

We knew that we had the Alëian plains once more before us, that Sis could not now be far distant, and that walking on that level greensward would be a very different thing to forcing one's way through a tangle of brushwood, buckthorn, bramble, and briar.

We started then with renewed vigour, but found we

had still some way to go before we got to the plain. On the slopes of the last ridge we had to surmount, we found a Turcoman encampment on a knoll overlooking the plain, and were hospitably received so far as a small cup of coffee was concerned. A black slave stood, as it were in honour of the guests, in front of the Sheikh's tent, pounding away, and accompanying the action with a song of welcome.

A knoll of rock in the distance was pointed out to us as bearing the castle of Sis. It was indeed a long walk, but we soon got down to the plain, and our troubles were over.

Evening had set in before we reached what had appeared as a knoll on the plain, but what on near approach turned out to be a giant mass of limestone rock, over a mile in length, several hundred feet in elevation, and crowned by the ruins of the castle of the Rupenian kings of Armenia.

Turning round this rock, the small but ancient-looking town of Sis came into view on the eastern side of the rock, stretching along the foot and up the sides of the hill, and domineered over by the church and monastery of the Armenian archbishopric, which stood half-way between the base of the hill and the castellated heights above.

We made our way as best we could to the former, where we were civilly received by the monks, who, however, did not seem precisely to know what to do with us. It was therefore almost as much a relief to them as it was to us, when Yusuf Sáada made his sudden

appearance. He had heard in the town of the arrival of two strangers, and guessing who they might be, he had come in search of us. Needless to say with what a sense of pleasure we followed him to a private house, in which the rest of the party had obtained comfortable quarters, and where in a brief time we were enabled to feast off one of Malta's delectable concoctions.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE STRONGHOLDS OF THE ARMENIANS.

Sis, occupying as it does a remarkable position at the foot of Taurus, where one of the chief tributaries to the Pyramus (known locally as the Kara Buna Chaye) flows through a gap in Taurus into the wide open plain of Cilicia, and with another great plain watered by the Pyramus itself, also with a castle rivalling that of Sis (ancient Anazarba), and further, standing as it does upon an isolated rock, must have been a fortress of great strength as well as of great antiquity.

It has been sought to identify the site with Pindenissus of Cicero, and with every probability in favour of the identification. Pindenissus was a very strong place, and sustained a siege of seven days (Cic., lib. v. 'ad Attic.,' Epist. xx.). It was in the words of its conqueror in *altissimo et munitissimo loco* near Mount Amanus—*non ipso Amano* as Cellarius (i. 222) critically remarks. Sis appears to be an abbreviation of Issus, as Pindenissus was on its side associated by name with the site of the great victory of Alexander. It certainly appears from the context of Cicero's Epistles, that Pindenissus was near to, or rather immediately connected with, Amanus; but if such was the case,

it is passing strange that those who have most studied the ground have found no other place to suggest for its positioning.

On the other hand, Cicero in an epistle to Cato describes Pindenissus as in Eleutherocilicium, or Eleuthero-Cilicia, a country infested by the Tibarani. These Tibaraneans appear to have been Armenians, or at all events tribes from the north, as Strabo, xii. 378, places them in Pontus.

Sis has also been identified with Flavias or Flaviopolis, noticed in the 'Synecdemus' of Hierocles, and medals of which city have been found from Domitian to the first Valerian. This Flavias is described as being situated on a mountain below Taurus, near the springs or fountains of the Calycadnus, and the identity is further established by its being placed in the Antonine Itinerary, under the name of Flaviada, at eighteen Roman miles from Anazarbum.

The latter castle appears to have been the home and place of sepulture of the early Rupenians; but in the twelfth century Leon II. removed the seat of government to Sis, and he and the takovars or kings who succeeded to him vied with one another in embellishing its cathedral.

Sis upheld its superiority over all the cities of Cilicia until the year 1374, and in the time of Leon VI., when the Mamluk Egyptians sacked the place, and reduced its castle to a heap of ruins.

It is now only a small place of some 200 houses, inhabited by Turcomans and Armenians. Langlois, who visited Sis in 1859 or 1860, says that in his time

it was ruled by the then representative of the Turcoman tribe of Khuzan Oghlū—long pre-eminent in the neighbourhood—and that it did not acknowledge the suzerainty of the Porte, or pay tribute to the Pasha of Adana.

All that remains in the present day of ancient and mediæval Sis are the ruins of the tarbas or castle, and of the church and monastery dedicated to the Virgin. The castle is divided into three parts, each on a different peak of rock, and erected at different epochs. Leon II. is credited with having built the first in A.D. 1186, and his work was continued by Hethoun I. and his successors. The selection of the place in succession to Anazarba attested much forethought and prudence. The cities of the plain—Tarsus, Adana, and Missis—were all open to invasion by any army moving along the high road of the ‘Gates’ before described. Anazarba, removed from this highway, was still a rock on an open plain.

The rock upon which the castle of Sis stood was, on the contrary, in a defile which presented many difficulties to the approach of the many enemies of the early Christians. It was, however, captured and devastated as we have seen by the Egyptian Mamluks, as also by the Seljukian Turks of Koniye, and fragments of walls, towers, and bastions, castellated buildings, a keep or dungeon, a chapel, cisterns, and a grotto, are almost all that remain to be seen.

The palace of the Rupenian takovars or kings stood on the site now occupied by the monastery. Indjidji describes this palace in his ‘Geography’ as having the

form of a tower, and the monastery, he says, was built out of its ruins. This tower was called the tarbas, and Langlois makes mention of a gold medal of the time of Constantine IV. of Lusignan, which bears on its exergue a tower representing the royal castle of Sis.

But this tarbas or tower was itself in a walled enclosure of some extent, and in which were the patriarchal palace and a church dedicated to St. Sophia, but with the sense of Theism which is inseparable alike from Christianity and Muhammadanism, it was, like its namesake at Constantinople, also consecrated to 'the Divine Wisdom.'

A little church, surrounded by walls, and with lucarnes almost as high up as the roof, is said to be the oldest in Sis, having been built by Hethoun, and dedicated to Surp-Sarkis, or St. Sergius. It is in a ruinous condition, and the apse alone remains of another church of the Rupenian epoch, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul.

The church called that of 'Our Lady' is of modern construction, all except the choir, which belongs to Rupenian times. The origin of the monastery is associated with the expulsion of the Catholicos from the patriarchal site at Rum Kaleh, on the Euphrates, by the Muhammadans, and his seeking refuge at this spot. The first monastery erected by the Patriarch Ghugas or Lucas in 1734, is now an Armenian school, and a patriarchal chair is preserved in it, constructed of wood at Aleppo in the middle of the eighteenth century.

The annals of the patriarchate of Sis are recorded in the '*Chronologie des Patriarches de Sis*,' and in Saint-

Martin's 'Memoirs on Armenia,' but M. Langlois added by his researches at this place to the number of inscriptions before known, and to a knowledge of the relics in the existing church and monastery, called that of Guiragos, and which claimed the possession of a finger of St. Gregory, but which is supposed, on better authority, to be preserved in the monastery at Edchmiadzin. M. Langlois also tells us that the archives at the monastery are all of modern date ; but in his personal narrative (p. 127) he insinuates that the patriarch did not permit access to the old archives, and he relates an adventure that befell him in a clandestine attempt made to discover them, for he found himself in the catacombs of the monks, and was obliged to beat a hasty retreat by the sickening smell of the place.

The library of the convent is said by the same authority to contain 145 manuscripts, of which he made a catalogue, and of 250 printed volumes, chiefly Liturgies of no especial value. But among the treasures of the church are two Gospels bound in silver, one written in the time of Leon V., the other in that of Constantine IV. (both of the Lusignan dynasty).

The environs of Sis were thickly populated in the time of the Armenian kings, and the remains of several churches and monasteries are still met with. Among these is one at the village now called Jawūr Koï, in which Langlois found inscriptions dedicated to Frenchmen whom he supposes to have dwelt here under the Lusignans, and whose descendants participated in the misfortunes and captivity of the last of the race, Leon VI., who died in the convent of the Célestines at Paris in 1393.

The day after our arrival at Sis, after a morning spent in visiting the ruins, the Colonel and myself started in the afternoon northwards, to visit some ruins spoken of as Kara Sis, or 'the Black Sis.' We advanced by a hilly and wooded country to some heights on which was a village called Yedesli. Beyond this the country became rocky and wild, and out of it rose two castle-clad eminences, one of which was designated as Kara Sis, the other, as we understood, Andal Kaleh; but Langlois says the name is Anton Kalehsi, or 'the castle of Antony.' We found, however, nothing but crumbling walls of basalt upon rocks of the same character, and nothing to reward us for our long ride.

Our return was destined to be disastrous. We had better have been on foot, as on the slopes of Taurus. Night came on as we reached the Yedesli hills. The road had been bad enough, but on the descent it was worse, and encumbered with rocks and stones. The Colonel, however, sped onwards, and I kept up in the rear till a large stone put a temporary end to my progress. The horse stumbled with his nose upon the top of it, and I was deposited on the other side in a thick covert of spines and thorns.

Taking my poor steed, that had cut its knees, by the bridle, I proceeded onwards on foot, but had not gone far when I heard a kind of moaning issue from the very depths of the rocks and shrubbery, and proceeding in the direction from whence the unwelcome sounds emanated, I found the Colonel, holding his horse, and in a similar plight to that which I had just been placed in.

On seeing me arrive all safe, he cheered up, and neither of us being hurt, we mounted again, and ultimately got back to Sis without further mishap. It was, however, the ride to Kilis over again upon a smaller scale, but unaccompanied by jackals, which did not put in an appearance here.

That part of Taurus which lies beyond Kara Sis is dotted with castles in which the Armenians took refuge when invaded in Cilicia. Among them was Pardzerpart, now called Bersbart, which was a kind of Ecbatana or treasury; Vanga, a baronial residence of the Rupenians; and lastly Gaban, a very strong place, where Leon VI. took refuge after the fall of Sis, and where he sustained a siege of eight months.

The day following this escapade we all started together for Anazarba, and our road lying over the plain was at first pleasant and agreeable. But we soon came to a range of low limestone hills which obliged us to follow a nearly due southerly course, till, gaining the valley of the Pyramus, we were enabled to turn round its abutments. Beyond, and rising abruptly out of the plain, was another low isolated rock, bearing the castle of Tum, and still further to the eastward, and up the valley of the Pyramus, was a more extensive but perfectly isolated rocky eminence, which bore upon its crest the ruins of ancient Anazarba, once the capital of the country.

The castle of Tum or Tumlo corresponds to that called Adamodana by Willebrand, which he tells us was made over by Leon II. to the knights of the Teutonic Order. It is a strong place, solidly built, and it

contains in its interior the ruins of a chapel and vaulted chambers.

There were several camps of Turcomans, of the tribes Busdagan Oghlū, Derkanteli Oghlū, Afshars, and others on the plain, which although marshy in places is at others grassy and admirably adapted for feeding large herds of cattle and buffaloes.

At one of these camps we separated; Murphy, Thomson, and myself proceeding to Anazarba, whilst Colonel Chesney travelled onwards in a north-easterly direction with the rest of the party.

We found a considerable extent of wall stretching out from the rock in a south-westerly direction, and which curving round meets a river—a tributary to the Pyramus—that, flowing from the north, sweeps past the north-eastern aspect of the hill, and then suddenly turns round its base to take a south-westerly direction, thus nearly encompassing the whole of the rock.

Entering within the walls, we found the vast enclosed area to be without traces of buildings of any description; but ascending the rock we first met with innumerable massive ornamented lids of sarcophagi, evidencing the former wealth of a city which was the home of the poet Oppianus and of the physician Dioscorides.

The castle or acropolis that crowned the hill was of vast dimensions, and still in tolerable keeping. It belongs to two different ages, the western portion, with semi-circular towers, belongs to the Byzantine era, the remainder belongs to the epoch of the Rupenian Armenians.



The ruins of a church which appears to have belonged to the sixth or seventh century are met with, as also an archway of considerable span, with two lateral doorways.

There are also ruins of two aqueducts carried on arches, and from eight to ten yards high. One of these, coming from the west, can be traced, although broken in parts, for some five or six miles, and the other, coming from the north, to near the mountains some fifteen miles off.

Anazarba has been visited in recent times not only by the members of the Euphrates Expedition, but also by Mr. Burckhardt Barker, who describes the ruins at length in his 'Lares and Penates.'

Since that time it has been visited by two accomplished archæologists, Messrs. Ch. Texier and Langlois, who have added much to our knowledge of the inscriptions met with, but M. Langlois was in error when he says (p. 437) M. Ch. Texier was the only traveller who previous to his arrival in Cilicia had visited and described the ruins of Anazarba.

Willebrand, to whom we are indebted for the earliest known description of the place, penned in the thirteenth century, relates that St. Gregory, being pursued when on horseback and coming to the aqueduct, he dismounted, and making a passage for himself alone, thus escaped his pursuers. A church was afterwards erected on the spot in commemoration of the miracle.

It has never been clearly established whence the name Anazarba was derived. Stephanus says from a

certain Azarbas. Suidas says Zarbas, and adds that it was also called Diocæsarea. Augustus called it Kaisareia; Justin, Justinopolis; and Justinian, Justinianopolis.<sup>1</sup>

It was on the plains near Anazarba, called Pratum Palliorum, that a great battle was fought in 1130, in which Boëmond, prince of Antioch, lost his life, just as he had gained the victory over the Saracens commanded by Redwan, Seljukian prince of Aleppo and Damascus.

John Comnenus also received his death wound while hunting wild boar on the same plain. According to the historians, his spear hand being forced back by a boar turning upon him, it was hurt by a poisoned arrow which lay in a quiver at his back. The wound was slight but the poison active, and he is said to have been recommended to have the arm amputated, but he refused, observing that 'the Greek empire could not be governed with one hand.'

The afternoon, after a cursory exploration of the ruins, was devoted to a round of bearings with the theodolite, probably the first time that such an instrument had stood upon the towers of Anazarba, and the area within was laid down by triangulation.

Evening was coming by the time this work was accomplished, and we descended by the east side of the rock amidst a dense growth of Christ's thorn, but finding the river to be unfordable, we had to turn round the

<sup>1</sup> An Arabian origin to the name—that of Aïn-Zarbah, from a spring that issues from the rock, has also been suggested. (See *Ainsworth's Magazine*, vol. vi.)

north side of the hill, and proceed some distance before we came to a bridge. Instead then of cutting as we had hoped across the country and overtaking the rest of the party, our road was prolonged by several miles, and night overtaking us, we were obliged to take refuge in the first Turcoman camp we came to.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PASS OF THE PYRAMUS.

WE left the Turcoman camp early the ensuing morning in pursuit of the rest of the party, and were lucky, after a ride of three or four hours, in catching them up at the village of Kars, to which, however, we had to be ferried across another tributary to the Pyramus.

There was no time for refreshment, for the baggage was already loaded, and we had to continue our journey breakfastless, as we had had to go to bed the previous night supperless. Kars is a permanent village, inhabited by Kurds, who were by no means so kindly disposed as the nomadic Turcomans. Our road lay hence over wooded, hilly districts, and we were brought to a little after noon by another tributary to the Pyramus, which swollen by recent rains, presented a formidable obstacle to our progress. After several unsuccessful attempts made to cross the stream, we succeeded in finding a ford, which we passed without accident.

We were, however, in consequence of this delay, overtaken by darkness before we came to a village. At length, lights were perceived glimmering at a distance, and in an apparent hollow to our right. The Colonel and myself started off as usual to obtain accom-

modation, and this owing to the alarm of the villagers occasioned by the lateness of the hour, was not obtained without some trouble. The village, however, called Kurbali, was inhabited by Armenians. So after a short time, confidence being established, we found ourselves in hospitable quarters and met with nothing but kindly treatment.

Beyond this village of Armenians, which lay embosomed in a beautiful country, rocky but well wooded, the road began to ascend, becoming more and more mountainous with each successive ridge we crossed over, until at last we arrived at cliffs beneath which the Pyramus was seen flowing at a depth of many hundred feet below us.

The path we had to follow was carried along the face of these cliffs and precipices, jammed in by mountains on both sides, the stupendous heights of Taurus, here called the Dürdün Tagh, rising up to the right in bluff, conical snow-clad peaks.

Strabo, a native of the country, was well acquainted with this little frequented pass, and which we were the first among moderns to traverse; and he describes minutely the difficulties which the Pyramus has to encounter—the salient and re-entering angles of the mountains, and the precipitous fissures, of such little width, that in some places, he adds, ‘a dog or a hare might leap them.’

The path, which was very narrow, varying from one to two yards, was carried along the side of the cliff, more or less precipitous in places, and presenting the same features, at times broken rocks, generally shrub-

clad, at others more precipitous. We came to a point where the pathway was so narrow that we had to unload the horses, as the least touch of the baggage at their sides might have tumbled them over. So the baggage had to be carried to where it became wider by some Kurd guides we had with us.

We had just succeeded in getting horses and baggage over this hazardous pass, when we came to where there was a kind of glen or ravine, the road receding inwards to its end, and then ascending very precipitously.

Our Kurd attendants, who had been murmuring for some time at the difficulties that had to be overcome, struck work at this point, and actually refused to carry the baggage up the next ascent. The Colonel's energy, however, only increased with the difficulties that had to be surmounted, and seating himself on a rock which commanded the ravine, he compelled them to the work with his gun on his knee.

One after another, the leathern sacks were carried up without accident, till it came to the turn of the horses, which had to be whipped up the path, so as to surmount it by an effort. Unluckily, in carrying out this manœuvre, two happened to get in the narrow pathway at the same time, one of them—Murphy's riding horse—was thus tumbled off the road, and rolled over twice before it was happily brought up by a tree. It was after a time extricated from this fearful position, overhanging as it did a precipice of many hundred feet in depth, nor was the poor animal much hurt. But it was a narrow escape for its life.

These difficulties at last overcome, we followed up in the rear, but to our infinite surprise, only to find Yusuf Sáada alone with the horses and baggage at the top of the pass. The Kurds seeing that we were not to be trifled with, and not liking the work, although they had got through the worst part of it, preferred a run-away scramble up the rocks and woods, rather than endure the slight exertion that was put upon them.

If our progress had been difficult with the help of even discontented and unwilling Kurds, it was not improved by the loss of such help, and our onward progress was but slow. Murphy, who had fallen in the rear, sent in word that his poor horse declined, or was not able, to go any further, and indeed most of the horses, although, as on many another occasion, we walked a good deal to spare them, were suffering from these forced marches, lasting as they almost invariably did from sunrise till sunset.

It was, however, essential, both for man and beast, that we should, if possible, reach a village before sunset, and as the pass was beginning to widen, all were urged to a further push. But such was the discomfited state of the poor animals that the effort was unsuccessful, and darkness overtook us at the foot of some hills where an old man and his grown-up son were tending a flock of goats. We distributed ourselves as well as we could, some of us actually taking refuge in a goat's shed made of a few twigs and branches interlaced, with their manure for a floor.

I do not know what occurred between Yusuf Sáada and the herdsmen, who were exceedingly churlish; but

in the morning the younger of the two informed us, in most abusive language, that if we came that way again we should meet with a different reception; for which he got a whipping, administered by Yusuf, across his shoulders, as a warning, I suppose, to be more civil to wayfarers.

During the course of the next morning's ride I stumbled upon a goodly vein of plumbago or blacklead, which had a very promising appearance; this was at a spot where the country opened a little, and led the way to a large village, called Anabad, surmounted by a castle, which unfortunately we had no time to explore.

Here, however, we obtained both milk and fruit, as also corn for the horses, and then making a fresh start, we arrived before dark at a village, the houses of which were scattered, and rose in tiers on the hill side. On a precipice on the other side of the river, the banks of which were now lower, stood a ruinous castle, called Dun Kaleh.

The village we had arrived at was called Fang, and its Sheikh was sought out to procure accommodation for the night. This, however, he protested it was not in his power to give, and it was in vain that we produced firmans and offered bribes, he remained inexorable. At length we got angry; when he said, 'Well, if you want a house, take one.'

Thomson and myself volunteered on this unpleasant service, and selecting what we thought to be a promising cottage, approached to take possession of the same, when we were met at the threshold, not by bearded Kurds, but by a poor woman with several children, who



implored us not to drive them on a cold night from their home. This was too much, and effectually subdued all our ardour in house-capturing, so we returned with feelings somewhat akin to having sustained a signal defeat, to search for the Colonel, whom we found still in altercation with the Sheikh, but the latter at length gave way to the unavoidable, and procured us a night's lodging.

A picturesque and pleasant ride, the ensuing morning, amid rocky precipices and wood-crowned hills, led us out of Taurus into the open but still in parts snow-clad plain of Marash.

This was a large town with some thirty to forty thousand inhabitants, and the seat of a Pasha, who when applied to at once supplied us with a home in the Christian quarter.

Marash is a city of great antiquity, situated as Theodoritus (ii. 25) correctly says between three provinces, Cilicia, Syria, and Cappadocia. It was known to the Romans as Germanicia and distinguished by the title of Cæsarea, and distinguished from Cæsarea Anazarba and Cæsarea Mazaca as Cæsarea Germanicia, as may be seen on coins of the time of Severus and of Pescennius. It is said to have been at this city that the latter assumed the purple.

It is, however, most celebrated in ecclesiastical history as the country of Nestorius and the seat of the episcopacy of Eudoxius, both rude innovators of the doctrines of the primitive church. Towards the end of the eleventh century it was governed by the Armenian Philaretēs. The first crusaders captured the city, and

it appears to have been ruled by the princes or barons of Tell Bashir, the site of which we have seen still exists with the same name attached to it on the plains of North Syria.

In 1147 the place was reduced by Masūd, Seljukian Sultan of Konieh, but it passed under the domination of the kings of Armenia, and was alternately a Christian and a Turcoman principality until finally brought by Sultan Sulaiman in 1553 under the dominion of the Osmanlis.

The Turcomans, who, however, have continued to hold the greater part of the country (for Sis, Zaitun, 'the place of olives,' and Hadshin, are the only towns that now remain to the Armenians, although they have many villages and live in the cities in considerable numbers), have rebelled on many occasions against the authority of the Ottomans, and although subdued, they have ever maintained a kind of quasi-independence of the Porte.

Colonel Chesney had got so wearied with the slow progress of the surveying party, and had become also so anxious in regard to progress made at Port William, that he left us the next morning to make his way back by a Roman road described in the Antonine Itinerary as leading from this place by Samosata to Edessa.

We followed early the next morning, so I had no opportunity of exploring the antiquities of the place. I had a narrow escape upon this occasion. The horses were brought in to be laden in the courtyard of the house in which we had been installed, and Murphy's steed being restless on mounting, launched out behind,

striking my horse on the flap of the saddle so powerfully as nearly to tumble him over. Had the horse's hoof struck my thigh (and it was within an inch of so doing) it would have been smashed into fragments.

In a semi-civilised and little frequented city like this, we were also pestered at our departure by the entire household of the Pasha from kawatchi bashi to private kawass, and from coffee-maker in chief down to the scullions, in search of the perpetual bakshish.

Our road lay at first across the more or less cultivated plain of Marash. Hence we ascended a wooded range of hills still covered with snow, descending thence into the valley of the Ak Sū or 'white water,' a tributary to the Pyramus, which has its sources in a group of lakes situated immediately below Pelveh, the ancient Perre. One of these lakes was known to the crusaders as the 'Crocodile lake.' A curious point, associated as it is with the Crocodilon flumen or more ancient Kersus in Cilicia, and Mr. Macgregor's discoveries in the rivers of Palestine in the history of the former and even present distribution of the reptile in question.

I cannot, however, but think that some great lizard, such as the monitors (*Ameiva*), which we afterwards met in such numbers on the Euphrates, was classed in old times under the head of crocodile.

An amusing anecdote is related in the travels of Bertrandon de la Brocquière, counsellor and first esquire-carver, as he describes himself, to the Duke of Burgundy (1432 to 1433).

'We thus travelled,' he relates, 'two days on the desert' (this was near Gaza), 'absolutely without seeing

anything deserving to be related. Only one morning I saw before sunrise an animal running on four legs, about three feet long but scarcely a palm in height. The Arabians fled at the sight of it, and the animal hastened to hide itself in a bush hard by. Sir Andrew and Pierre de Vaudrei dismounted, and pursued it sword in hand, when it began to cry like a cat on the approach of a dog. Pierre de Vaudrei struck it on the back with the point of his sword, but did it no harm from its being covered with scales like a sturgeon. It sprang at Sir Andrew, who with a blow from his sword cut the neck partly through, and flung it on its back with its feet in the air, and killed it. The head resembled that of a large hare, the feet were like the hands of a young child, with a pretty long tail like that of the large green lizard.' <sup>1</sup>

There can be little doubt from the description here given, that the poor creature with whom the doughty knights engaged in mortal combat was a large lizard of the monitor tribe. I found the interior of Harūn al Rāshid's castle on the Euphrates actually crowded with these huge lizards.

After obtaining rest in a Turcoman's tent, we proceeded next morning over a stony and woodless range of hills, on which the snow lay deep, and by the evening we reached the great valley known as the Araban Owahsi, which is watered by a tributary to the Euphrates, in part cultivated, and with several villages on its northern side.

<sup>1</sup> *Early Travels in Palestine*, edited by Thomas Wright, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., &c., pp. 289, 290.

We were surprised, on arriving at one of these for the night's halt, to find the Kurd peasants in a state of considerable excitement, and receiving us in far greater numbers than was usual. Their conduct, even after we had obtained a room, was so rude and importunate, that after bearing it for some time, we made a simultaneous rush at them, and forcing them out, closed the door upon them.

We afterwards found the Colonel had lodged the night before in the same village, and he had from the annoyance which he experienced started without his valise, which was actually lying, unknown to us, in the house in which we had found quarters.

The villagers thought at first that we had come to reclaim the property, but gaining courage upon finding out their mistake, they began to consider the possibility of adding a little more to the stock already in store. The Colonel's valise was, however, ultimately recovered through the intervention of the Pasha of Marash.

It was in this same Araban Owahi that the Kurds first began to harass by their desultory fire and attacks upon stragglers, the Turks whom I had the misfortune to accompany in their retreat from Nizib. It was not that they had any sympathy with the Egyptians, it was simply from detestation of the Osmanlis and the love of plunder.

A tell or mound of debris exists on this plain denoting an ancient site, and which from the number of coins found there, has been called Altun Tash, or the 'golden stone.' It would well repay archæological research.

Leaving this valley, tenanted by rebellious and thieving Kurds, we advanced by a wooded and stony range of hills, upon which we observed a Roman arch in the distance to our left, and reached the same day the great castle known as Rum Kalah or 'the castle of the Romans,' and the seat of the Armenian patriarchate before it was transferred to Sis.

Mr. Wood, formerly consul at Damascus, was, with a companion, at the time of our arrival in the country detained at this place as spies, but they were liberated through Colonel Chesney's prompt interference.

We visited the place of their imprisonment, which was in the higher part of the castle, and having gone beyond this to its summit in order to obtain a round of bearings, this brought a host of kawasses, like hornets, about our ears, and they insisted upon our leaving the spot, under the pretence that it overlooked the Governor's harem.

The castle is peninsulated by a stream which comes down here to the Euphrates, flowing through a deep fissure in the rock, the great river being also at this point hemmed in by limestone rocks.

It was impossible with such fanatics as dwelt in this lonely place to carry on either archæological or theodetical observations. The few houses that belonged to the place were situated on a kind of plateau on the other side of the brook, and to judge by the bright colours of their flowing garments, there seemed to be some wealthy Turks residing in the place.

From Rum Kalah we had but a ride of only some eighteen miles, amid the varied and pleasant scenery of

the Euphrates, to the great mound of debris which bears the suggestive name of Telo Balkis. Neubauer, in his '*Géographie du Talmud*,' notices this site (which would be well worth archæological exploration), under the name of Beth Baltin (at p. 42), and under that of Balthin (at p. 354).

Hence it was but a short ride of about seven miles to that little scene of European activity already familiar to us as Port William.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE PRINCIPALITY OF EDESSA.

THE day of our return from Taurus Colonel Chesney gave me the option to accompany another excursion into Mesopotamia. Ever anxious to extend my acquaintance with the country, and in particular with its geognostic features, I gladly accepted the offer.

The leader of this little expedition was Captain Lynch, and he was accompanied by his brother, Lieutenant Lynch, Lieutenant Eden, R.N., myself, a kawass, and a native servant.

What between the time lost at starting and the delay experienced in being ferried over the river at Biri-jik, we did not get further the first day than the village of Kaffir Bey, situate on the slope of the hills which here begin to close in the bed of the river to the northwards. Whether the original proprietor was a Frank or a freethinker (and I have met with many among Muhammadans) I do not know, but to be so would be as opprobrious with Islamites as in Europe, and involve the epithet of 'infidel.'

The next day we carried on the survey past Rum Kalah, but on the opposite side of the bank, so that I had an opportunity of satisfying myself by this and the



previous journey on the right bank of two points, first, that there are no remains of a bridge between Bir and Rum Kalah, and secondly, that there were no traces of a bridge ever having existed at the latter place. That it was a Zeugma, or 'pass,' or ferry, there can be no question, but this evidently must not mean to designate a bridge here no more than at the Zeugma *par excellence*, the ferry of Bir or BIRTHA.

There was another Zeugma at Samosat, a town which lay on the right bank of the river, and opposite to it was, according to Strabo, a town called, after the Macedonian conquest, Apamæa, but I am not so sure about the castle of Seleucia, in which Tigranes caused Cleopatra, surnamed Selene or Diana, to perish seventy years B.C. Pliny places it opposite Zeugma, and gives three Roman miles from Samosata to the river Cappadox (Gök Sū), twenty-three from thence to Arulis, and twenty-four to Zeugma, altogether fifty Roman miles, so that Zeugma here would correspond to Rum Kalah. But in lib. v. cap. 24 he gives seventy-two Roman miles as the distance of Samosata to Zeugma. Here he must have had the ferry at BIRTHA in view. It would seem more likely then, that Cleopatra Selene was put to death at Rum Kalah.

The reader will excuse me these apparently trivial details, but if he knew the confusion that exists among ancient and modern geographers, and still more so among the historians of the marches of conquerors or conquered in olden times, and among their more modern commentators, he would feel that they are by no means so trivial as they appear to be.

At Rum Kalah the river is, as before observed, pent up between perpendicular cliffs ; it has in fact to force its way through a vast plateau of limestone rocks, thinly covered with trees, with which I was destined to make a further and unpleasant acquaintance.

The road carried along the side of these precipices presented accordingly many difficulties to progress, but we were not encumbered with baggage-horses, as on the previous expedition, and we got on fairly enough.

Some few miles, indeed, beyond Rum Kalah we came to a spot where the precipices receded from the river, and where, much to our surprise, a town presented itself, built upon the face of the cliffs, half cabins half huts, with low walls in front, rising on successive ledges tier above tier, and what was more curious, with a narrow way, just practicable for horses, carried up in a zigzag manner from one ledge to another, till the summit of the cliff was reached.

Yet was this place, although no doubt a place of refuge of persecuted Armenians, a site of antiquity. Known as Aianha in the present day, it corresponds to the Aniana of Ptolemy, which he places near Porsica, and the site of which I recognised on another journey at a neighbouring place now called Yailash.

After traversing this troglodytic town, to the no small amusement of its secluded inhabitants, we took an almost retrograde direction to an Armenian village, known by the same name but distinguished by the additional epithet of Dibbin, or the place whence dıbs, the sweet juice of the grape, is to be obtained. And indeed there were extensive vineyards around this otherwise

stony spot, and its inhabitants supplied Port William with wine, so that our reception at the village was most hospitable.

Ruins of an old Armenian church, and many other fragments of antiquity, were met with at this ancient-looking site, where are also met with in abundance those curious pear-shaped cavities, the entrance to which is blocked up by a single large stone, as were alluded to as far back as the times of Xenophon as reservoirs for wine, but they have been used for other purposes, as storing corn &c., since the advent of Islamism.

As both places bear the same name, it may be taken for granted that Dîbbîn, with its ancient church, was the original site, and the village of rock-dwellings a place in which the Armenians sought refuge in time of trouble, and to which they have since held from force of habit or dread of further persecutions.

The next day we passed a large village called Nârsîs, close by which was a tell or mound of debris, denoting an ancient site, and up an adjacent valley, watered by a rivulet, were some cliffs with excavated grottoes, either rock-dwellings or sepulchral grottoes. This was evidently a site of antiquity, and its name recalls that of Narsis (also written Nerses), the distinguished patriarch of the Armenians in mediæval times, and whose residence was at Rum Kalah before the removal of the patriarchate to Cilicia.

On this day's journey, while passing under some rocks which jutting over the river obliged us to take to the water, Eden's sword fell out of its scabbard, and

the waters were so deep, and the current so strong, that we could not recover it.

Beyond this we got into more open country, passing Aidel Bazaar, where was a ferry on the river, and a weekly market was held at the place. This was probably the site of Urema—an episcopacy of the middle ages—situate between Samosata and the Singa river, called Marsyas by Pliny.

A little above this, an almost isolated mass of shingly rock rose to an altitude of several hundred feet, and a bend in the river led by a sepulchral chapel (known as a jemjami) to Kantarah, or 'the ferry,' a poor village of Kurds opposite to Someisat.

After taking up our quarters at this place, we were ferried over to the exhibition of Turkish poverty and decay which now characterises the once proud capital of the kings of Commagena.

We had a rather long interview with the Governor, to whom Lynch presented a pair of pistols, and who was in consequence very gracious. We then walked through the town, which contains about 400 houses of Armenian tradesmen, Kurd and Turcoman peasants, and a scattering of Osmanli officials, to the great mound or tell—all that remains of the ancient palace and citadel, and which is still crowned by the remains of ruined walls. These, indeed, with a few fragments of marble columns to be met with here and there, and traces of an aqueduct, which extended hence some ten miles to the river Claudius (now Kaktah Sū, with whose cool waters I had occasion to make personal acquaintance on another journey) were all we found to attest to the existence

of a once renowned city. It is remarkable how particular the ancients were about their water. Here were the fresh waters of a river of Taurus brought some ten miles by an aqueduct on arches, whilst the river Euphrates flowed past the town. The same attention to the character of the water supply is to be seen in many other Roman stations.

Historical marriages, not always happy in their results, were celebrated at Samosata, to unite by more intimate alliances countries ever alternating between intrigues and wars, which the power and genius of Pompey failed to find a solution to. As a Christian episcopacy the same otherwise favoured site became a hotbed of innovations, which were denounced as heretical by a jealous supremacy; but learning must have flourished even under such adverse circumstances, for it not only boasts of Lucian and of Paul of Samosata among its illustrious names, but according to Armenian tradition, it was here that St. Mesrop obtained by incessant prayer the gift of the Armenian letters, and this so late as A.D. 406. It is a pity for the steady progress of civilisation that they did not adopt the Latin alphabet; but the whole story is a myth, for the Armenian character is of greater antiquity than the Roman.

Samosata lies in a beautiful open valley of the Euphrates, has a delightful climate and a fertile soil, with abundance of water, and therefore with unlimited resources for a civilised people under a good government. The passage at this place was distinguished in ancient times as the Zeugma of Commagena, and the Antonine

Itinerary and Theodosian Tables have several roads leading to it. We, however, found no remains of the site of Apamæa, save a mound of debris, which Strabo tells us stood opposite to Samosata.

We were enabled by coming here to correct a great error common to most maps and geographies, and derived from mis-statements of the ancients, that it is at this point that the river Euphrates, after having had hitherto a south-westerly course, assumes a south-easterly one. The fact is, that it maintains its south-westerly course, flowing as it were towards the Mediterranean, until it arrives at the limestone upland of Rum Kalah, when it takes a south-easterly bend. It was not, however, the pass of Rum Kalah that determined the south-easterly course to the Persian Gulf so much as the Taurus itself, where it has to force its way through the pass of Gergen Kalahsi, and Pomponius Mela was really in the right when he said, ‘*Ni obstet Taurus, in nostra maria venturus.*’

Whilst we were at Someisat a report had got abroad in Kantarah, that there was a hakim bashi with the party, and on our return to the village a native came in, and without saying a word threw himself prostrate at my feet. Quickly raising him from so humiliating a position, I found that he was suffering from an inveterate leprosy, and that, much to my sorrow, it was out of my power to do anything to relieve him.

A long ride of upwards of thirty miles across the ancient kingdom of Osrhoene, so called from the Chosroes of Armenia, took us in one day from Samosata to Urfah, the ancient capital of the country. Ad-

vancing from the valley of the Euphrates the outline of the country was at first tame, but it soon became broken up by volcanic ridges and cones, with deep intervening valleys, producing cereals, cotton, olives, and grapes; and this picturesque district—a little region of extinct volcanoes—was succeeded, on approaching Urfah, by long lines of rock terraces and narrow valleys, which ultimately expand to receive the city itself.

On approaching the same place from the west, as I did on a later occasion, the country is stony and naked, and the road difficult, but the country is low, whilst to the south the level plains of Mesopotamia extend from the foot of the hills named after the mighty hunter, the Nimrūd Tagh, and are seen from the castle of Urfah stretching to beyond the utmost boundaries of the horizon, with the towers of Haran and the distant range of the Abdul Assiz Tagh alone breaking the uniformity of the landscape.

Urfah, in its modern condition, has been minutely described by Mr. Buckingham, who gives the length and breadth of its bazaars, and a particular account of the contents thereof. It is a walled city, the circuit of its walls extending from two and a half to three miles, but the citadel and many public buildings, including barracks and caravanserai, are without the walls. The vast mezars or cemeteries are also outside the town, and are backed by far stretching rock terraces, dotted with innumerable sepulchral grottoes.

The castle, which at once defends and commands the city, is a noble ruin, the walls of which alone remain, the interior being one vast and disorderly mass

of debris, out of which two Corinthian columns still rear their lofty shafts. Among these ruins was a marble slab with an inscription, which has I believe since been transcribed by the Rev. Dr. Badger. The castle is defended on one side by a fosse, a work of great labour, and on the other by the steepness of the ascent.

Urfah is celebrated for its abundant springs of water. One of these is some distance from the town, and is said to present the peculiar phenomenon of gushing out at intervals with a roaring noise. This fountain supplies the stream known as Daisan by the Syrians, and Scirtos by the Greeks, both alluding to its sudden rises, which have been known to occasion serious damages, as related by Assemani, from Denys, Patriarch of the Jacobites, and confirmed by Evagrius and other mediæval writers.

The other springs, two or three in number, have their origin in the valley between the castle hill and the rise upon which the town is built. These sources are surrounded by shady groves, amid which they form ponds, and part of the waters is carried off by artificial canals to a marble reservoir or tank in front of the mosque of Ibrahim el Khalil—‘Abraham the beloved’—a very graceful and elegant specimen of Saracenic architecture.

It was from the beautiful position of these waters that the Greeks gave to Urfah the well-known designation of Callirrhoe, or ‘Beautiful waters,’ applied also to other springs. I found the temperature to be only a little over 69° Fahr., scarcely above the mean temperature of the place, but as they are said never to



freeze, they must preserve their mean temperature in winter.

The sacred fish which abound in these reservoirs are descendants, according to the traditions of the place, of the fish beloved by Abraham, but they are more incontestably a relic of the ancient Syrian worship of the principle of fecundity, preserved in the traditions of Oannes and Dagon, adopted even by the early Christians, as is to be seen in the catacombs of Rome, and here still upheld by Muhammadans.

Buckingham, who estimates the number of fish at 20,000, says they are fed upon vegetables and leaves, but this is a mistake; they are fed upon bread, maize, or pastry; vegetable refuse would destroy the beautiful pellucidity of the waters, and as to the numbers, it would be rather difficult to test the accuracy of an estimate.

We did not fail, while at Urfah, to inquire concerning the tradition of the Lord's correspondence with Abgar, and the transmission to that prince of a kerchief upon which his portrait was impressed. We were shown, at the Armenian cathedral, after some demur, evidently arising from the fear of ridicule, a modern kerchief upon which a face had been imprinted, after the idea of the countenance derived from Raphael, and by him from the well-known letter to Tiberius.

The Armenians, however, merely stated this to be a copy of the original, which had been lost in the miraculous spring before alluded to. According to ecclesiastical tradition, the original was sold by the Saracens to the court of Constantinople for the sum of

12,000 pounds weight of silver, the redemption of 200 Mussulman captives, and a perpetual truce for the territory of Urfah.

This Abgar, called Abgarus and Augarus by the Greeks and Latins, was the second of the dynasty, whose history has been illustrated by Bayer in his work, '*Historia Osrhoena et Edessena ex nummis illustrata*,' Petrop. 1734, but he does not notice the Armenian Chronicles as preserved by Father Chamich, and which relate that the name is derived from Arag-ayr, 'excellent in wisdom,' and that the first prince of that name founded in Mesopotamia a city which was called Abgar Shat, and which is supposed to be the same as Nisibin.

The Abgar who rebuilt and fortified Urfah, and who according to the same chronicles held correspondence with Jesus of Nazareth and embraced Christianity, removed thither in A.D. 14; and it appears then that the first of the name—the same who drew Crassus into an unfavourable position before his defeat, and who is called Ariamnes by Plutarch—resided at Abgar Shat, or 'the city of Abgar,' or Nisibin, and not at Edessa.

Eusebius says in his '*Ecclesiastical History*' (i. 13) that he found a letter written by Abgarus to Jesus in a church at Edessa, and that he translated it from the Syriac. This letter is, however, deemed to be spurious, and Bell in his '*Geography*' speaks of it as 'a devout lie.' Yet are there greater probabilities that Abgar should have written to Jesus than that Jesus should have written to Abgar. That such a correspondence was carried on is believed by all Oriental Churches, and

has received credit by so devout a man as Addison in our own country.

The peculiarity of the position of Edessa (the name which it received from the Macedonians, albeit the vanity of one of the successors of Alexander gave to it for a short time that of Antiochæa), upon the dangerous verge of two long contending empires, has been so distinctly felt and so ably expressed by Gibbon as to leave nothing to be added to it.

The last of the Abgars was sent in chains to Rome by Caracalla, but the walls of their princely city witnessed his avengement in the overthrow and capture of a Cæsar in the person of Valerian by the first Shah-pūr or Sapor. In the time of Heraclius, it was reduced by the Saracens under Izedi.

After it became a county or principality under the crusaders, it was captured by Nur-ed-din, or 'the light of the faith,' Ata-Bey of Mosul, and two pieces of ordnance are preserved at that city which belonged to the Counts of Edessa. Reconquered by the crusaders, under whom it became a renowned principality, it was reduced thirty-eight years afterwards by the victorious Salah-u-din, or Saladin. This unfortunate city was also devastated by the Moguls under Hulagu, and by the Tartars under Taimūr or Tamerlane. It passed under the dominion of the Osmanlis in the reign of Selim I., and the Turks restored to it its original name of Ur (Urhoi of the Syrians), but with an additional syllable Ur-fah.

During the middle ages, and as Edessa, it attained high eminence as a seat of ecclesiastical learning. If

not the actual residence of St. James the apostle, the patron saint of the place, it was certainly that of James Baradæus, the founder of the Syrian Monophysite or Jacobite schismatics, and who, with characteristic Oriental exaggeration, is said to have ordained 80,000 bishops, priests, and deacons.

It was also the stronghold of Nestorius in the time of his persecution, and it was from hence that Abraham, afterwards Bishop of Beth Raban, went forth to spread the Nestorian doctrine throughout the East. Many devout Christians suffered martyrdom in the city, among whom Adæus, said to have been sent thither by St. Thomas.

The traditions which associate the memory of Abraham—the greatest name of all antiquity—not as the representative of the patriarchal principle, but as the propounder of the Unity of God, will be treated of after my visit to Haran and Serug, cities in the fatherland of the patriarch of patriarchs.

## CHAPTER X.

## ABRAHAM'S FATHERLAND.

It was a bright and beautiful morning when, quitting the city of Urfah, where we had been hospitably entertained by the Pasha of the place, we started to cross the plains of Mesopotamia towards the site of Haran—the home of Terah, Abraham's father.

Unfortunately, the mirage, owing probably to a watery brightness in the atmosphere, played us all kinds of fantastic tricks, not allowing us to distinguish a thing even at a mile distance ; covering the land with a sheet of brilliant water, and converting every object, even a stone or a bush, into some strange and often gigantic creation, and magnifying a mere hut into a vast castle, with ' cloud-capped towers ' in the strictest sense of the words.

The plain was very fertile, and is a well known granary of rice ; but as the natives seldom cultivate the same patch of ground two years consecutively, leaving one, from lack of manure, to fallow, the resources of the soil are partly lost. It is watered and irrigated by numerous streams and artificial channels, derived in part from the rivulet of Urfah, but chiefly from the river of Jalab—the ancient Kalaba—and which with

other streams descending from the hills of Nimrod, unite to form the Bilecha—the ‘Royal river’ of Strabo, but more generally called, after the city whose walls it washes, the river of Haran, or of Carrhæ, but with various orthography, especially among the Byzantine writers. Stephanus alone calls it the Cyrus.

On reaching Haran, we found that its citadel occupied a rocky eminence which here jutted out of the plain, but that a considerable area beyond that was enclosed within walls still standing, although in a dilapidated condition.

Within this area there were no dwelling-houses remaining, but there were several ruins of great interest, one of considerable extent, which we deemed to have been a temple, and a lofty Saracenic tower, as well as traces or foundations of several large edifices.

We set to work at once, as this was a first visit of Europeans in modern times, to make admeasurements for a plan of the place, but the extraordinary mirage of the morning was succeeded by a hurricane of wind which raised the dust in such a dense cloud as to render our task one of great difficulty, and we were ultimately driven to take shelter in the castle, which we found to be tenanted by a few poor Arabs.

The most interesting relic that we found was a lion, rudely sculptured, and lying outside of the walls. It was, however, a testimony to the occupation of the place by the Assyrians of old, as it was also a station on the way of their frequent incursions into Syria.

Buckingham makes a strange mistake in placing Haran two days’ journey from Urfah; its towers and

castle are plainly visible from the castle walls of that city, from which it is a ride of only four or five hours, for the abundant waters render the road devious. Benjamin of Tudela notices it as two days' journey from Dakia or Rakka, the city of Harūn al Rāshīd.

Quitting Haran the ensuing day, we passed the well known to the present day by tradition among the natives as the well of Rebekah. There was nothing to distinguish it from the ordinary wells of the country beyond an unusual accumulation of large limestone slabs, which testified to its having been in use from a remote antiquity.

Our way hence led over an undulating country, with fertile valleys alternating with low but barren and stony tracts. These tracts were thinly populated, but we arrived in the evening at a large Arab encampment where we met with unbounded hospitality from these children of the tent. They almost quarrelled among themselves as to which should take our horses from us, and we had not been many minutes in the encampment before two goats were slain for our evening's repast, whilst Nubian slaves were keeping the pestle and mortar in quick movement to supply a constant succession of the usual little cups of coffee.

The following day, after crossing some low hilly ranges of the same barren stony character, we came upon a great plain, watered by abundant streams and dotted with the villages of Arabs. The houses of these villages were, apparently from want of wood, built with semi-circular domes of mud, and looked like so many bee-hives. The plain was everywhere cultivated,

and about ten miles long by five broad. In each of the villages there were from fifty to a hundred domed huts, and we counted forty of them within view at the same time.

The Arabs, who called the plain (one of the most productive rice countries in Mesopotamia) Serug or Sarug, conducted us to the ruins of a city which once stood near the centre of the plain, but excepting one upright column, nothing remained but traces of buildings and fragments of hewn stone, which covered a vast extent of ground.

Yet was this the site of a city well known to the Romans, familiar in history under the name of Batnæ, Batne, and Batnas. Stephanus alone calls it Bonches. Edessa, as a Christian patriarchate, held under it four episcopacies; Haran, Callinicus (Rakka), Batnæ or Sarug, and BIRTHA (Birijik). This identification of Batnæ with Sarug would of itself prove the identity of the places, laying aside that it still preserves the patriarchal name.

It was the nearest place to the pass at Kalah en Nesjm, on the Euphrates, and hence was, after Haran, the next station on the way to Mambej or Hierapolis—the Carchemish of the Scriptures, according to some authorities. It was also visited by Julian, who crossed the river at the same place. It was at that time, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, an opulent city, and had an annual fair in the month of September, which was frequented by merchants from India, with silks and other goods. Procopius describes it, however, in Justinian's time, as an obscure town, and held by



Chosroes (Khusrau Anushirwan), who does not seem to have done anything towards repairing the ravages of war.

We were led by our Arab guides to the southern end of the plain, and at a distance of several miles from the ruins of the city, to where were two colossal lions sculptured in alto rilievo in very fine grained basalt with considerable artistic skill. They were lying on the ground, with no ruins near them, and appeared to have been left, *in transitu* probably, to the pass of the Euphrates. Eden took sketches of these relics of Assyrian times, which, with sketches made at Haran, are reproduced in General Chesney's great work on the Euphrates.

After a long and fatiguing ride, we arrived the next evening at Port William, where to my great delight I found that the 'Euphrates' steamer had cast her moorings and dropped a few miles down the river; so quitting my companions, I succeeded in joining my ship the same night.

I must, however, before proceeding further, justify the title given to this little exploration, as carried out in 'Abraham's fatherland.'

We read in the generations of Terah, the father of Abram, in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, that Reu begat Serug (the Saruch of Luke iii. 35); Serug begat Nahor; Nahor begat Terah, and Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Serug was therefore great-grandfather to Abraham.

Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

‘And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram’s wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.’

The Ur of the Chaldees was identified by Eupolemus, as quoted by Eusebius, with Urchoe, in Khaldaea, and would therefore be sought for at Warka, but from inscriptions found at the place Sir Henry Rawlinson and modern Assyriologists identify the place with Mu-kayir or ‘the place of bitumen,’ on the right bank of the Euphrates.

The abodes of the patriarchs after they had gone forth from Ur of the Chaldees to Aram Naharaim, ‘between the two rivers,’ or Mesopotamia, were apparently named Ur after their primeval city, Sarug after Terah’s grandfather, and Haran after Terah’s son. It is not improbable that the latter city also bore the name of Nahor, also Terah’s son, for the patriarch’s servant was sent to a place so named in search of Rebekah, whose dwelling was in Haran.

It would appear that as early as the time of Job, the Sabæans of Haran became distinguished from the Khaldæans; for the Sabæans fell upon his oxen and asses, while the Khaldæans fell upon the camels—the land of Uz being admitted as the land of Ur.

There seems to have been some confusion among Oriental writers, more especially Yakub and Mes’udi, in identifying Haran of Aram Naharaim with a city of the same name in Media, the Aïreyana, ‘the pure,’ of the Zend Avesta, and according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, the

Ecbatana of Atropatene. But the places were too remote to require lengthened discussion as to their non-identity. The 'Ar-ran' and 'Shiz' of Mes'udi were not in Aram Naharaim, nor was there any other patriarchal site in the same region.

There was no question as to identity with the Romans, who variously designated the place as Charran and Carrhæ. There is no historical fact from which the place derives so much interest as from the melancholy fate of Crassus and his son.

Unfortunately, Gibbon, following the Roman apologists, has not given, geographically speaking, a correct account of this campaign.

It could be easily shown that Crassus crossed the Euphrates at the old Assyrian pass at Kalah Nesjm; nor was he misled so much as is supposed by Abgar, but rather caught in an ambush laid for him on the banks of the Bilecha, where his son fell a victim to his ardour. 'Carræ clade Crassi nobiles' afforded no shelter to the proconsul, but he was driven towards the mountains of Masius (now the Karajah Tagh), where Octavius made a stand near Sinnaca or Sinna, the site of which, at Koh Hissâr, I was lucky enough to discover upon a subsequent journey, while the unfortunate Crassus was slain in a neighbouring marsh such as are common in this region of basaltic rocks.

The description given by the apologists of Galerius and Crassus of a 'smooth and barren surface of sandy desert, without a hillock, without a tree, and without a spring of fresh water,' is not applicable to any portion of Mesopotamia which is watered by the tributaries

to the Bilecha and the Khabūr. Almost every village has its little marsh, and almost every marsh has its litter of wild boars. Horace, with more justice, frequently reverts in terms of indignant sorrow to campaigns so inglorious to the Romans.

Urfah is identified by its actual name, as well as that of Urhoi given to it by the Syrians, with the Ur, not of the Chaldees, but of Abram or Abraham's fatherland. Although the name of the place has often changed and it was called Edessa by the Macedonians and Osroene by the Armenians, there is no variation in this tradition, and the identity of Ur and Urfah is supported by the authority alike of Christian and of Muhammadan writers.

The word 'Ur' has been read by some as 'country,' and by Bochart as a 'valley,' but the Jewish rabbins are unanimous in translating the word as 'fire' or 'light,' and it is the version given in the Vulgate (Isaiah xxiv. 15). It would appear then to simply refer to the spot where the primordial fire of the Khaldaeans burnt, and which (although confounded by Bochart) was in all times distinguished from the Ur or 'fire temple' of the Persians, which was at or near the bitumen fountains on the river Tigris.

The original worship of fire by the Khaldaeans was afterwards propagated by the Sabaeans or Tsabians, and the Persians and Parsis. The temple at Haran, to judge by its remains, must have been as splendid as that of Hierapolis or of Baalbek.

It seems probable from the various traditions connected with Abraham, more especially his being thrown

into a fiery furnace, and imprisoned in Accad, that he underwent persecution in his own country in his advocacy of the simplicity and unity of worship of the one God, and Assemani relates from Oriental traditions, that he even brake up the idols in his father's house.

The modern Urfah teems with memorials of the patriarch. There is not only the mosque of Abraham and the tank with fish 'beloved by the patriarch,' but there is also a tomb or sepulchral chapel of Abraham, but this may be merely in consonance with the Mussulman practice of raising ziyarets or places of pilgrimage in honour of a holy man. There are, for example, no end of such sepulchral chapels erected in honour of Elias throughout the East.

With respect to the third region in the same neighbourhood still bearing the name of one of the patriarchs of the same family, we have not only the permanence of name and tradition, but also the fact that its bishops were in Christian times designated as of Batnæ or Sarug. It is impossible, indeed, not to look upon this recovery of the patriarchal site of Serug<sup>1</sup> and its connection with two others, and the numerous facts associated with their names and history, all pointing to the same conclusion as to their being the seat of 'Abraham's fatherland,' as not by any means the most important, but as one of the most interesting results of the Expedition to the Euphrates.

The Arabs preserve even the tradition of the place where Abraham crossed the river on his way to the land appointed to him by God—the land of Canaan.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Appendix No. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix No. 9.



*BOOK III.—THE DESCENT OF THE RIVER.*

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CHAPTER I.

## EUROPUS AND CECILIANA.

EARLY in the month of February 1836, an opportune reinforcement arrived, consisting of four sappers from England and six seamen drafted from H.M.S. 'Columbine,' which restored the Expedition to its original strength.

Previous to my return from the patriarchal lands of Ur, Haran, and Serug, the steamer 'Euphrates' had ascended to a position opposite to the castle of Bir, and from whence it saluted the Sultan's flag with twenty-one guns, which were returned at occasional intervals, as time and circumstances would allow the three dismounted guns which constituted the whole of the armament of the castle to be loaded and discharged.

Mussulman and Christian inhabitants alike flocked to the banks of the river to see an iron boat swim, and what was more, stem the current of the river. The paved courts of the mosque, the open galleries of the coffee houses, and the flights of steps that led down to the river banks were everywhere covered with human beings ; even the climbing walls bristled with heads, and

the dark entrances of the distant caverns appeared alive with dusky tenants, who seemed on such an occasion to have ventured into unaccustomed day. There was a tradition familiar at Bir, and which accompanied us the whole length of the river, that when iron should swim on the waters of the Frat, the fall of Muhammadanism would commence.

I cannot quit this ancient city without a word or two descriptive of its peculiarities. We had been with it now during the heats of summer and in the cheerless winter, and almost every building and cave was familiar to our eyes, and yet under every aspect it still remained the same beautiful city which it appeared to be at first, and its picturesque outlines and position possessed the same claims to admiration viewed from whatever side and at whatever time.

The best view of the place is, however, obtained from the opposite side of the Euphrates. From such a position the whole length of the castle is seen, occupying the crest of an isolated hill of chalk, having steep precipices towards the river, while it is separated from the town, which itself rises in an amphitheatre on the slope of the same chalk hills, by cliffs in part paved with large flagstones, and a fosse or ditch.

The castle is followed along the river side by various buildings of greater or less pretensions, among which are the Muhammadan schools, and a pretty little mosque with graceful minar, open court, and three flights of steps for the ablutions enjoined previous to prayer. Then comes a much frequented coffee house, where balconies overlook a spacious archway, beneath which



the ferry and the octroi business is carried on, and which leads by a flight of steps to the market. A few more irregular buildings skirting the water's edge are abruptly terminated by the embattled towers which flank the walls of the city.

The space occupied by the town itself is very limited, the chalk cliff rising upwards almost immediately from the river, and the walls are carried up these in an irregular but highly picturesque manner, afterwards crossing the summit of the cliffs on the crest of which their sharp crenellated outline, interrupted by occasional towers, cuts through air and sky. Ammianus, who misspells Virtha for Birtha, says 'Muris sinuosis et cornutus.' Not only is every available spot within the walls built upon, but the whole face of the hill is burrowed with excavations of various extent, from the subterranean rock dwelling to the insect-haunted cow-house. On the more precipitous ledges the green ibises ranged themselves at certain seasons in rows, like a file of riflemen. They are, like the stork, protected, and we saw two or three perched on trees near a village at Serug.

Viewed from the north, the town with its noble castle and rugged walls comes out in bold relief. The outline of hills and walls is more distinct, and the irregular form of the castle, perched upon its craggy rock, advances into the broad expanse of the river like an armed warrior ready to dispute its further progress. And lastly, when the outline is softened by moonlight, and all the contrasted forms and various groupings are dimmed by its pale tremulous gleams, the scene wins in imagination what it loses in reality. Every air

breathes balm, every sound is musical ; the lofty minarets, silvered by the moonshine, tower over the dark waters ; the broken ridge of rock and wall stands more clearly out from the star-spangled sky ; distant lights gleam faintly from among the scarce seen caves ; voices fall at intervals on the ear ; marble tombs rise up like robed pontiffs ; towers and buildings rear themselves above ruined piles, dark covered ways, and solemn arches ; while over and above all the great extent of castle spreads one vast and ominous-looking shadow.

Strong walls flank the entrance of this castle, which is further commanded by a square tower that rises full 100 feet above the iron gateway. A long row of modern buildings occupies the lower level which borders the river side within the walls, while the higher platform is reached by a winding road on the side of the rock, in part carried through a subterraneous passage. The ruins upon the platform cover a considerable space of ground, but little is found that is still perfect. The brown-jacketed guardians of the place, with a whole armoury in their waistbands, alone haunted these wide-ranging chambers and ruins.

In an apartment at the south-west angle was the coffin of a holy man, covered with tattered drapery, and the green turban of a descendant of the Prophet at his head. Flowers of the 'immortel' were strewed around, and innumerable bits of votive rag were tied about. On the floor were also two large heaps of stones said to cover two other bodies.

On the northern side were some lofty halls and long corridors, which it was necessary to explore by

candle-light. Frescoes of the times of the Crusaders were to be seen in one of these halls, and over the principal doorway, ornamented with tracery, was a large painting of two armed men, pointing to a colossal star and crescent, which surmounted a cross indicative of the Knights of St. John, and still called the Maltese cross, besides two other insignia of the same knighthood.

This painting would appear to refer to the capture of the place by the Crusaders. Baldwin advanced to the Euphrates with a force of little more than 200 knights and about 1,500 men, under the guidance of one Pancratius; and having reduced Samosata, then governed by the Turk Emir, Ba'aldek, Edessa, held by the Greek Prince Theodore, capitulated, and BIRTHA was subsequently reduced, in order to keep open the communication with Antioch. Salah-u-din, however, reconquered the place in 1180.

The castle is, however, one of great antiquity, and its Roman name BIRTHA, now Bir or Birijik, is derived from the Syrian BIRTHA, the Hebrew BIREH, or Chaldee BIREUTHA, meaning an 'embattled citadel,' all having the same Semitic root, and which is the same as the Sanscrit VARA, and the Zend VAR, used in the Greek BARIS and the Persian BARU, 'a fortress or walled fortification.' The place is, however, more generally alluded to by the historians of old as ZEUGMA, or 'the pass on the Euphrates.'

Within one of the vaulted apartments of the castle was a deep well which had a remarkable echo. The sound of a stone thrown into the well was heard to strike water. This was followed by a low murmur like

the rippling of water, interrupted by the shock as of another stone falling, and that by another and another, each coming nearer and becoming more distinct, till the last broke out of the well with a startling effect.

I joined the steamer the evening after its ascent to Bir. She was lying close to a dark bank, the decks were being washed, and everything seemed uncomfortable; but before sunrise next morning, the bugle roused us to the consciousness of an eventful day.

It would indeed be difficult to convey an idea of the pleasurable feelings with which we all contemplated the descent of the river. It was the main object of the Expedition. It had never ceased to be the great subject of our thoughts and hopes, and it had always been the point towards which all exertions and labours were directed.

The long delay caused by the difficulties of the transport, the arduous task of putting the boats together, the sickness and death that had befallen so many of the party, and the long travel that had intervened between our first landing on the coast of Syria and the day when, strong in the worth of our stout steamer, we felt ourselves positively afloat and off, seemed but a succession of trials, the goal of which was the river, and the reward success.

For eight long months had that patriarchal stream been ever flowing by us, like some mighty grave thought—the reading of a dream—which we were apparently never destined to decipher; but we now dwelt on its ample bosom, that seemed at once full of busiest anticipations and of softest rest, and our feelings had

undergone a wondrous change. The same memorial stream was murmuring past us, but hope smiled on its surface and lent enchantment to its waters, and little did we anticipate at this moment how many brave fellows these waters were destined to engulf.

There was the same cloudless sky and delicious temperature, the same gorgeous sunset, and the nightly blue firmament, starry with constellations by which Abraham steered his course from his fatherland ; but the same sky and the glorious lamps which illumined its high vault were now to guide us in our onward course ; how differently did they glow !

‘*Hinc movet Euphrates !*’ We had wasted, used, and fashioned with ten thousand fancies, all that lay on the shores of these hushed waters, and as they crept by the ruins, marvellous revelations of the past, we had thought their movement to be solemn and their flow sepulchral, but now they seemed to bound past us with pleasant lightsome ease.

The scream of the startled pelican or the gurgle of some huge siluroid wallowing in the waters, was no longer necessary to break the silent ripple. There was the steamer proud in its iron flanks, confident in its unspent force of steam, and manned with hearts zealous in duty while rejoicing in the spirit of adventure, and full of that ambition which, like the river itself, could not look back, but was ever urged onward with a strong swelling desire.

The cabin aft, the best in the steamer, was given over to Dr. and Mrs. Helfer, Colonel Chesney and Lieutenant Murphy had cabins on the left, the gangway, my cabin,

and closets occupied the right, and a passage in the middle led to the mess-room. Beyond this were the engines and boilers; then a series of cabins in which Lieutenants Cleveland, Charlewood, Fitzjames, Sergeant Quin, and the engineers were accommodated. One cabin was devoted to the purposes of a surgery. The men were accommodated in the fore-castle.

The day before, a boat had been sent on ahead to examine and sound the river for a distance of twenty to thirty miles, and the officer who had accomplished this task, and thus made himself acquainted with the channel, became the pilot on the occasion of the first day's descent, while another was despatched in advance to become the pilot on the second day, and thus the naval officers took it by turns to survey the river and to pilot the vessel. It was also hoped that by means of the rough charts thus obtained, the steamer 'Tigris' would be enabled to follow a distance of two or three such journeys in one day and thus save a considerable consumption of coal. Fitzjames had also charge of a raft upon the river, loaded with coal and heavy weights, but this was unfortunately soon wrecked.

Colonel Chesney took the detailed bearings of the river from the steamer, and the survey was also carried on at first ashore by a chain of ground trigonometrical angles carried across to the principal heights as they presented themselves. This labour, which was carried on by Lieutenant Murphy, assisted by Major Estcourt and Thomson, was, however, soon abandoned, the speed of the descent being incompatible with its accomplishment. I, on my part, devoted myself to a

record and delineation of the various rock formations as they presented themselves in succession. With me also lay the comparative geography of localities. Strange to say, among all our officers, with the exception of Colonel Chesney, there was but a secondary interest taken in such inquiries. It is, unquestionably, just as well it was so, for they had far more practical matters in hand.

Passing the gardens and orchards of Bir which occupy a valley south of the town, and contained a plane tree that measured thirty-six feet in circumference, and which afforded prolific crops of figs, pistachios, grapes, and apricots, besides the vegetables of the country, we came to a low, rocky, and comparatively naked country.

Occasional chalk cliffs, cut up to the west by the valley of the Kersin, rose to the east gradually in low rounded hills towards higher table lands with rock terraces. This irregular country was only diversified here and there by neat whitewashed tombs, sometimes perched on a peninsulated point advancing into the river, at others upon some prominent but more distant elevation.

The first object of interest which we reached was an extensive mound of debris on the right bank of the river, having a central hollow space within, the outlying embankment being disposed in the form of a parallelogram. These were the remains of a walled city which Maundrell long ago recognised as the site of Europus of antiquity, although it is miscalled Jera-bûlûs by the natives.

There were many fragments of brick and tile and hewn stones scattered within what had been the walls, as also a broken slab of marble with a sculpture in alto rilievo, also noticed by the same old traveller, but overlooked by Viscount Pollington who passed this site on his way from Urfah to Aleppo. It lies on the north-west side of the slopes of the mounds.

The identification of this site with the classical Europus depends upon the Theodosian Tables, which give a distance of twenty-four Roman miles from that place to Zeugma (Birjik), and this corresponds with the result of the survey, as also, as we shall afterwards see, with its relation to Ceciliana.

It is a site of but small historical importance. Belisarius is, however, described, on his arrival in Syria, shortly after the invasion of Chosroes, as finding the Roman generals, among whom was a nephew of Justinian, imprisoned by their fears in the fortifications of Hierapolis.

But, instead of listening to their timid counsels, the veteran general commanded them to follow him to Europus, where he had resolved to collect his forces. The same city became a Christian episcopacy during the middle ages, but it does not appear to have been ever in favour with the Muhammadans.

The name is a singular one. It is put by Pliny and Ptolemy in the masculine gender, thus disconnecting it at once from the fabled daughter of the Phœnician king Agenor. Isidore of Charax gives Eutropus as a Greek synonym of the Rhages of Tobit. But this



corresponds to Veramin, the Median Eutropus. Stephanus describes it as a Macedonian fortress.

Lord Pollington was inclined ('Journ. of Roy. Geo. Society,' vol. x. p. 453), from the apparent derivation of the name Yerabulus or Jerabulus, from Hierapolis, to believe that this was the site of that renowned Syrian city, but he justly adds that it is possible that the names of two ruined cities, so near each other, may have been confounded. I am more inclined to think that Jerabulus is a modification of Europus, just as it is of Hierapolis.

The celebrated geographer D'Anville, in his great work, '*L'Euphrate et le Tigre*' (4to, Paris, 1779), erroneously identifies Europus with Nesjm, a notice of which latter he obtained from the geographical commentary attached by Schultens to the '*Life of Salah-u-din*,' but in another place he identifies what he calls Kalaat el Negiur with Callicome. It is evident that Kalah Negiur is only a misreading or a misspelling of Kalah Nesjm.

Beyond Europus the banks of the river became more rocky, and we brought to, on the evening of March 24, at a point where a low promontory of indurated chalk advanced from the right bank into the river, thus obstructing the current, and causing the waters to return upon themselves, and sweeping up from beneath the caverned mass they formed a whirlpool which is called Kayara, or 'that which sounds like thunder.'

There is a village at this place called Gurluk, and it is at this point that Arab tradition places Abraham's

passage of the river on his way from Haran to the land of Canaan.

Beyond this place, the outline of country on the right bank sank gradually and stretched out in gentle undulations and grassy plains towards the valley of the Sajūr ; but the left bank was more hilly, with occasional mounds and villages, as Tell Adrah and Zehereh, which were backed by the same table lands, with at this portion of the river occasional rock terraces of basalt.

Passing a headland called Moghar, on the left bank, similar low cliffs were observed to range along the right immediately beyond the valley of the Sajūr, and to constitute a still more remarkable headland, which bore the very fragmentary remains of another of those ancient towns which once enlivened the fertile banks of the great river, and was known by the euphonic name of Cecilia or Ceciliana.

The place itself is now called Sarisat, and it is by the distances given in the Theodosian Tables from Zeugma and Europus, that the position is identified with that of Ceciliana of the Tables and the Kekilia or Cecilia of Ptolemy ; and this is further corroborated by the distances given from Hierapolis. Cellarius remarks that the name Ceciliana would indicate the ‘ castle of Cecilia.’

If so, never has a castle been more effectually rased to the ground, or its materials more dispersed. We arrived at this point on the 25th, and lay to the 26th and 27th, waiting for our consort the steamer ‘ Tigris.’ With the time thus placed at our disposal, we still found few remains of the old site. We had observed that

the cliffs bounding the valley of the Sajūr were dotted with caverns or rock dwellings, and we found some of these to be inhabited, and to be at times connected by excavated galleries.

At the headland itself the rock was harder and not excavated, and it was cleft by a natural fissure or opening through which a streamlet fell over a little amphitheatre of rock draped with maidenhair fern, and constituting a pleasing recess. It was above this fall that we met with the only traces of a site in hewn stones and foundations of houses. We also found a tablet on the face of the cliff at the extreme point of the headland, bearing an inscription of which the very characters were illegible.

Cellarius has suggested the identity of Cecilia with the Cingilla of Pliny, which latter Salmasius thought ought to be read Gindara. But as the Roman province of Commagena commenced at Imma, now El Umk, on the plain of Antioch, and ended at Cingilla, and as this extremity of the province was on the Euphrates, below Zeugma, there seems to be every probability that the identification was a correct one.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CASTLE OF THE STARS.

WE began at Ceciliana to see the Arabs passing the river on inflated skins. To accomplish this, they tied their clothes (not a very heavy burden with these poor people) on their heads, and reposing the chest on the skin, to which they also held on by their arms, they pushed with their legs behind. They were thus enabled to cross the river with ease and safety, and women were even seen to cross, like so many Dercetos, with children on their backs, but the current was so strong that they often landed at a considerable distance below where they took to the water.

At this period of the year the genial influence of spring was beginning to make itself felt. The mean temperature for the first fortnight of the descent was  $56^{\circ}$ , max.  $73^{\circ}$ , min.  $42^{\circ}$ . The mean of the barometer for the same period was 29.257, max. 29.568, min. 28.950. The irregular barometric range or oscillation amounted to 0.618, but the amount of the daily or regular oscillation did not exceed 0.048.

I watched the barometer carefully, with the view, if possible, of effecting a barometrical levelling, but notwithstanding the small amount of the diurnal oscillation,

the ascent of the column of mercury by no means coincided with the descent of the stream. Thus the mean of the barometer was at Kayara 29·213, Cecilia 29·403, Nesjm 29·435, station off Hierapolis 29·875, Kara Bambuch 29·257.

Taken as a whole there was, as compared with our own country, a general absence of vegetation, and on this, the earlier part of the descent, we had no wood. The absence of trees, and even of shrubs, on the plains and hills, gave to the country a general appearance of desolation, but the rocky banks of the river were pleasingly carpeted with yellow flowering cruciferae, and the more sheltered spots were enlivened by star of Bethlehem, tulips, two species of anemone, and a silvery ranunculus.

We observed that the natives ate freely of the wild lettuce, sow-thistle (*Sonchus*), common thistle (*Carduus*), and the roots of the wild onion, leek, squill, and ixia; and as vegetables were very scarce, and the sanitary condition of the crew had to be considered, the use of these vegetables was introduced on board, and I added to them afterwards the leaves of the atriplex or orache, which is cultivated in France as a culinary vegetable, tastes like spinach, and was in great demand at the mess table.

It is difficult to determine what plant represents the so-called Babylonian cress, which has been identified with the *Nasturtium orientale* of Tournefort, and with *Lepidium perfoliatum* of Linnæus. It appears most likely from Dioscorides so particularly noticing its healthful properties (in which he is also supported by

Herodotus and by Xenophon, the latter of whom describes the Persians as eating large quantities of it) to belong to the natural family of the cruciferae. Besides the tetradynamous plants just mentioned, the Arabs also eat the leaves of a species of *erysimum*, or hedge mustard, and in more southerly regions they ate several species of *cleome*. If the Babylonian cress was the same as the cardamon of the Greeks, that name has been given to a different plant, as occurs in the case of the garden cress as known to antiquity.

Living things, although not numerous, were now abroad. Among the types of spring were the heteromera, among which particularly *pimelariæ*. On the river an occasional piebald kingfisher hung over its finny prey, numerous cormorants and pelicans were seen travelling northwards, and the red Nubian goose had just arrived from the Nile, to build in pairs in holes in the cliffs. Hawks also abounded. Among wild animals, particularly in the jungle at the mouth of the Sajūr, were boars, jackals, and black wolves. On the plains the little Tartarian wolf had replaced the fox, which was, however, met with all along the course of the river.

After waiting for the 'Tigris' till the morning of the 28th, we made a further short descent of eighteen miles. The early part of the navigation lay through a rocky barren country, and in the latter part the hills approached close to the river banks, which they lined with steep cliffs of from some forty to sixty feet in height.

The steamer brought to at the end of these, and

where the country opened, leaving a comparatively clear space, in the centre of which, and on the right bank, stood an isolated mound or hill bearing the castle known as Nesjm Kalah or 'the Castle of the Stars,' while an equally expansive valley was observed to open to the east, or on the left bank.

It was a beautiful and secluded spot over which the Saracenic castle, still in almost perfect keeping, in as far as what builders irreverently call the carcass was concerned, domineered majestically. Yet it had been the pass by which Assyrians, Persians, Romans, and Muhammadans had from times immemorial crossed or recrossed on their way to and fro, from Assyria to Syria, or from Syria to Mesopotamia.

It was a favourite passage with the Arabs to the present day. There was a well-beaten track on both sides of the river, but no dwelling-house or ferry, and we could discern fragments of ruin in the opposite valley.

The 'Castle of the Stars' obtained that name from its having been erected by the Khalif El Mamun, celebrated for his proficiency in astronomy, and who, selecting this spot as a favourite place of residence, made of it also a kind of observatory, whence its name—'the place from whence the stars were watched.' It was a relic, therefore, of the brightest days of the Khalifat, when the arts and sciences flourished on the banks of the Euphrates even to a greater degree of perfection than they had then attained in Europe.

It became in the time of the crusades one of the strongholds of Salah-u-din, when after the check given

to the overwhelming progress of the Seljukian Turks by the first Crusaders, the Kurd prince became the bulwark of Muhammadanism, ultimately founding an Ayubite dynasty upon the wreck of the Khalifat, which continued paramount till the time of the Osmanlis.

D'Anville identified the same site with the Callicome of the Low Empire. But the Antonine Itinerary contains a list of stations from Callicome to Edessa in which we find in succession :

Callicome to Bathnas	.	.	.	.	MP. xxiv
Bathnas to Hierapolis	.	.	.	.	„ xxi
Hierapolis to Thilaticonum	.	.	.	.	„ x
Thilaticonum to Bathas	.	.	.	.	„ xv
Bathas (Batnæ) to Edessa	.	.	.	.	„ xv

The site would therefore correspond to Thilaticonum. The derivation of the word from *thulakos*, a sack, and *koma*, a hill or mound, applies perfectly to the place, a hill or mound in a hollow or *cul-de-sac*. Julian also makes mention of a Syrian Bathnas in his 27th epistle to the sophist Libanius, and the Emperor also makes mention of Callicome as lying between Berœa (Aleppo) and Hierapolis.

The castle itself is a splendid ruin, and the most perfect specimen of its kind that we met with. The form was that of an irregular parallelogram, with square towers and connecting walls or curtains between, having no windows externally, but terminated by a parapet which protected the flat terraced roof. Both towers and walls had openings or embrasures, but without bartisans or projecting turrets.



The chief entrance was defended by two square lofty towers, forming part of the main building, as did also the gateway, which opened at once into the interior halls. The inner court was not extensive, nor divided into inner or outer wards, but simply giving light to the various arched divans and open rooms, as also to those above. Everything was light and elegant—an Alhambra on the Euphrates. The corridors were long and lofty, the apartments extensive, and approached by graceful Saracenic arches, or ascending by flights of steps to the terraces above. The whole was more adapted for palatial comfort than for defence, but still it was in parts encumbered and labyrinth-like, from the number of chambers and dark passages.

There is mention made by the Arabian geographers of a tunnel having once existed at this place, or at Zenobia, lower down the river, and carried beneath the stream. Colonel Chesney accordingly deputed me, with the aid of two seamen provided with spades and pickaxes, to make what researches I could.

After a careful examination of all the subterranean passages, and penetrating many a dark and dreary passage, we found that the vaults, descended to by a flight of steps beneath the north entrance tower, were so filled up with bats' dung that we could not determine whether there might not be a further passage at that point.

We accordingly resolved to commence our excavations at that place, but this was not effected without some delay, for the vaults were so full of large bats (*Rhinolophus*), that as often as we introduced a light,

they extinguished it by their numbers. It was impossible, therefore, to proceed without expelling our winged assailants, and they were driven off by spadefuls through the aperture by which we had gained admittance.

The excavation was then commenced in a bed of guano which seemed to be of interminable depth. After working for two hours without arriving at anything but heaps of stones and bricks, the pungent odour of the guano, the pulverised dust which filled the dungeon, penetrating into our eyes and lungs, and the want of fresh air, so overcame us, that we were obliged to give up for a time.

But on returning into daylight a surprise awaited us. The seamen when on duty on shore were allowed arms, and before going to work they had deposited their coats, pistols, and cutlasses at the entrance of the dungeon; and now these were found to have been taken away.

It was immediately concluded that the Arabs had been there, and that most likely they were still within the castle. Luckily I had kept (since I had become acquainted with the wild beasts that attend upon all researches whether in natural history or archæology in this country), my almost inseparable companion—a double-barrelled fowling-piece—with me, so leaving one of the men at the gateway I proceeded with the other to search the passages.

We were soon interrupted, however, by the man at the gateway calling out that he saw an Arab ascending the steps to the front terrace of the castle. We

accordingly hastened in pursuit, and ascended the flight of stairs. But either the Arab had disappeared or it was a false alarm, for we found no one there.

After a prolonged search, it was agreed that it might have happened that some of our own party had come upon a visit to the castle, and seeing the coats and arms, had taken them away. No sooner did this idea suggest itself to us, than I despatched the two seamen to the steamer, which lay upwards of a mile from the castle, while, determined that the robbers, if hid in the recesses, should not in the meantime escape, I mounted guard outside of the gateway.

It was my turn now; the sailors had been gone some time, and a feeling of loneliness gradually crept upon me. It was not loneliness alone, for I had been alone many and many a time, but the peculiar position I was placed in, and which, with the solitude of the place and the report that an Arab had been seen, made itself more and more sensible.

The oblivious portals, grey with age, cast a flickering shadow around, while the lofty towers and battlements were reflected in the glassy river below, and the rippling of the waters seemed to lend to them a rocking movement. It is not surprising that, under such circumstances, imagination conjured up an Arab peeping over the parapet above—nor am I sure that it was not an Arab to the present day.

Be this as it may, when the seamen at length returned, they found me sitting with my fowling-piece cocked and in hand, anxiously looking out for a second appearance of the kerchiefed head, to have a pop at it.

I need not say that their return was welcome, and still more so the intelligence they brought, that the arms and habiliments were safe on board ship ; so I thought it as well to hold my tongue as to the supposed Arab on the terrace, and to take a quiet leave of the ‘ Castle of the Stars.’

## CHAPTER III.

## MAGOG, CARCHEMISH, AND HIERAPOLIS.

ON the 31st of March the steamer dropped down the river a distance of about five miles to a point where there was an opening in the hills on the right bank, and which Colonel Chesney justly considered would afford at once the nearest and easiest road to Hierapolis, a city which took precedence for wealth, population, and sanctity over all others in this part of Syria.

Our party was a pedestrian one, and as the Colonel had given me the option to take such convalescents among the men as a walk might be beneficial to, we started pretty strong in numbers.

During a walk of at least ten miles, nothing occurred to break the monotony of the scene; the plains and hills were at this season fairly clad with greensward, enlivened by a few flowering plants, but there were no trees.

The ground undulated at times, although we were following a long valley or opening with a gentle ascent, at first westwards, and then turning south-west.

Gaining the upland in the latter direction, the remains of a great city burst upon us, in all the indistinctness of crumbling ruins within an almost boundless

extent of walls. All the authorities who have written upon this once celebrated site have agreed in testifying to its magnitude. Ammianus calls it a most capacious city, and Procopius designates it as the chief and most noble city in that quarter of the world.

These ruins appear to have been visited for the first time in our own days by the well-known traveller Maundrell—a writer whose veracity and accuracy of observation I had several opportunities of testifying to.

As we approached, a few Arabs made their appearance, and they kept increasing in numbers during the whole time of our stay. In order to save time, duties were quickly divided. Colonel Chesney began taking ad-measurements, Major Estcourt and Fitzjames got out their sketch-books, Murphy and myself took bearings, while some of the men who accompanied us kept the Arabs in countenance, and soon lulled their suspicions and got into friendly communication with them.

It appears that they called the place Bambuch, a corruption of the Bambyce of the Lower Empire, and both alike corruptions of Mambej or Mambey—the Arab way of putting Magog. In the same manner our sailors corrupted Mambey, on the coast of India, into Bombay. It is well known that the Romans (Pliny, v. 23; Strabo, xvi. 515) called the city Bambyce. Pliny says, '*Bambycen, quæ alio nomine Hierapolis vocatur, Syris vero Magog.*'

Modern Assyriologists have identified the same place with the Carchemish of 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 and Jer. xlvi. 2, and the capital of the northern Hittites. The Syriac version calls it Mabung, and it is written Kar-

gamus in the Assyrian inscriptions, but there are good reasons for thinking that the latter part of this name is an Aryan termination, and a dialectic variation of Pergamus, 'a fortress.' Others explain the word as 'the stronghold of Chemosh,' the 'sun or fire;' an epithet which would be repeated in the word Hierapolis.

What would then remain of Assyrian in the name? Kar, or Karki, is also to be found at the city at the mouth of the Khabur or Chaboras, the name of which has been read as Kirki or Karki—the Cercusium or Kerkusium of the Romans—and which is still called Karkisiya by the Arabs. This latter place is situated on the high road from Assyria to Palestine, as Magog is on the high road from Assyria to Syria, and it was approached by a multitude of towns, alike from Assyrian times up to those of the Khalifat, as shown in the first by Layard's researches, and in the second by the Arabian geographers. It is thus possible that there may have been two places known to the Assyrians by the same name with a varied termination.

The first allusion to Carchemish in Holy Writ is when Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against 'Carchemish by Euphrates.' The king was combating the Assyrians, for he said to Josiah, 'I come not against thee this day, but against the house where-with I have war' (2 Chron. xxxv. 20). This is further corroborated by Jeremiah (xli. 2): 'Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-Necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth

year of Jehoiakim.' In verse 10 it is also said, 'The Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.' Both sites alike would lie north (a little west and north-west) of Judæa. The allusion made to the same place by Isaiah (x. 9) is not to be read as Calno or Calneh being the same as Carchemish, but that the princes of Calno were as much kings as those of Carchemish, and those of Hamath as Arpad, and those of Samaria as Damascus. There is not much to be gathered that is satisfactory in the point of view of comparative geography from these scriptural notices, but although it is difficult to understand why a Pharaoh should have gone to the uplands of Syria to attack a king of Babylonia, still they point rather to the northern than to the north-western site. I shall, however, return to this vexed question when we get to Karkisiya. There are other points connected with the discussion—more particularly the maintenance of a large park of elephants by the Assyrian monarchs at Karki or Kargamus. True the Seleucid kings maintained a park of elephants at Apamæa, but the grassy marshes of the Orontes were close by. Bambuch is especially destitute of water or marsh, whilst the mouth of the Khaboras would be peculiarly favourable to the maintenance of such a park.

The walls of Bambuch, which are clearly traceable for several miles, and were defended at intervals by towers, of which a few are yet standing, although in a ruinous condition, were judged on examination not to belong to a very remote antiquity, and with, at the most, Roman or Byzantine foundations, to present in



their towers and more perfect portions, evident proofs of Saracenic repairs.

Within this great space, thus wall enclosed, were several low but picturesque piles of ruin, with large hewn stones and fragments of columns scattered here and there amid masses of brickwork of such solidity as to clearly indicate that they were the remains of the great public buildings which once adorned the city of Hierapolis.

This was further attested by the circumstance that in the intervals between these ruins of a better class of edifices, there were no traces of the ordinary dwellings of the inhabitants ; in this point exhibiting a marked difference from the ruined cities of the early Christians in the same country, where the fragments of every house as well as church are clearly visible.

Indeed, where the great cities of antiquity were afterwards occupied by Arabs, Persians, or Turks, without any Christian interpopulation between the Pagan and the Muhammadan era, the houses, built of sun-dried bricks, have always disappeared, except in the case of such as have continued to be inhabited, leaving only the fragments of public or regal edifices, and such deserted cities constitute a kind of link between the towers and vast mounds of debris which attest an Assyrian or Babylonian ruin ; the perfection met with in the deserted homes of many of the early Christian communities ; and with the exceptions of occasional kingly homes, as at Ctesiphon and Atrâ, the mere mounds of rubbish and pottery which mark an old Arabian or Sassanian site.

Among these various piles of ruin, scattered about

in the utmost irregularity, one particularly attracted our attention as presenting much in its features that approached to the Egyptian in character. There could be no doubt of its great antiquity. Everything was massive and simple. The front was formed by a great oblong mass of masonry, composed of huge stones, placed in careful and neat juxtaposition, but without cement, and from which a vestibule or propylæa, six or seven feet deep, had apparently projected. The vestiges of a doorway also still remained, the overthrown lintel of which had been a massive and solid square or parallelogram. From fallen masses it also appeared that the upper tier of stones had projected beyond the remainder, and had been chiselled into an ample and beautiful architrave, but it was impossible to say whether or not the entablature had borne a pediment.

This portal could be traced by the foundations and overthrown walls to have led into small chambers or cells and dark sanctuaries of the same massive and simple character. There was every reason, then, for believing that these were the remains of the great temple which for ages sanctified the city, and which, originally destined to the worship of the sun, became afterwards devoted to that strange form of symbolism, so frequently alluded to in Holy Writ, as a monstrous goddess, half female, half fish, and well described by Pliny as ‘*prodigiosa Atargatis*.’

The principle of fecundity, as represented by the sun, moon, and stars—by fire and animals—by the so-called *crux ansata* of the Egyptians—by the fir-cone of the Khaldæans and Assyrians—by the sunbuleh or ear

of corn—by the phallus of the Greeks and Romans, and preserved in the piscine emblems and the sacred fish of Christians and Muhammadans alike, always formed a chief object of adoration among the nations of the East.

The varieties which the same general form of worship, as in the case of Atargatis, presented, are too numerous to detail; and as these merged into still greater but more poetic forms in Greek and Roman mythology, so is it utterly unnecessary to expound them here.

It is sufficient to point out that Atargatis was also the Astarte of the Phœnicians and the Syrians, the Astoreth and Succoth of the Hebrews, the Oannes, Dagon, and Derceto of the Greeks, and was admitted into the classic pantheon as features of Venus, Juno, Diana, Urania, Luna, and other pantheistic deities. Astarte is placed by Milton among the fallen angels :—

With these in troop  
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians called  
Astarte, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns,  
To whose bright image, nightly by the moon,  
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs.

The crescent here noticed as the symbol of Astarte, and found on coins struck at Ba'lbek, and which also formed the ornaments taken from the camels' necks at Succoth, has ever remained the symbol of Islamism.

Cicero relates that this piscine goddess was married to the beautiful Adonis, and we have equally credible pseudo-historical details of her nuptials with B'al, the god of Ba'lbek, or with the dissolute Elagabalus. Her

image was for this purpose transported from Carthage to Rome (not omitting the rich offerings of her temple), and the day of this mystic marriage, and gross example of a corrupt idolatry, was held as a general festival in the capital and throughout the empire.

It would even seem that Horace had this marriage in view when he says :

Juno et Deorum quisquis amicio  
Afris.

The representative of the god of Ba'lbek or Emesa was on this occasion the celebrated black stone described by some historians as quadrangular, and of irregular shape and four feet high, but by others as a conical black stone. It is represented in the latter form on an Imperial medal struck at Emesa, in honour of Sulpicius Antoninus.

There is every reason to believe from the minute descriptions given by the ancients of the colour and appearance of this stone that it was a meteorite, and this view of the subject is upheld by the tradition attached to it at its original site in the temple of Cybele in Phrygia, where it was said to have fallen from heaven, and which fact was also related of it again at Emesa, no doubt to attract the multitude to its shrine.

This origin of the stone appears to have been the cause of its great sanctity. The subsequent history of the meteorite is also curious, although somewhat obscure. It appears to have been removed in solemn pomp from Pessinus to Rome, in order to drive the Carthaginians out of Italy. It got thence, somehow, to Emesa, from

whence it was taken back to Rome by the Emperor Elagabalus, who apparently took his name from the object of his adoration, for the stone was called El Gabel or El Kabûl, and it, or another like it, still sanctifies the 'Kaba' in the temple at Mekka.

The fane of Atargatis was celebrated for its opulence and its consecrated wealth, and afforded a liberal maintenance to more than three hundred priests. As is to be expected, such riches tempted the cupidity of privileged plunderers, and Crassus is reported, on his ill-fated expedition against the Parthians, to have spent several days at Hierapolis, as it was then called, weighing out the sacred moneys of the goddess. The temple was, however, a ruin in Julian's time, over fourteen hundred years ago.

We looked in vain for the tank or reservoir which contained the sacred fish attached to the temple of Atargatis. We fancied we could find traces of such in front of the temple, but were not certain. Ælian, in his 'History of Animals,' relates of these fishes 'that they went in a crowd, conducted by a leader, and that they blew and worshipped among themselves in a wonderful manner.'

There were several other ruins of some extent scattered about the precincts of the city, and among these were a series of low round arches which appeared to have belonged to an aqueduct.

Nothing, however, remains to attract attention so much as the vestiges of the temple which gave to the place its name, whether Magog, or Kar-Chemosh, or Hierapolis, and its fane. It seems by its massive

strength and simplicity to have been peculiarly adapted for a situation such as that in which it was placed—an upland commanding a most extended outlook, and surrounded by an immense wilderness, where it was essential, in order to give any structure an imposing character, that it should be in harmony with the surrounding scenery.

In such cases all small subdivisions would have appeared mean and out of place, and all trivial details lost. Magnitude and solidity were what were wanted. Within it is different, and the dark chambers of such massive edifices are common to Egyptian, Indian, and Persepolitan architecture. Nor were probably the propylæa and the sphinxes of Egyptian architecture, represented by the pyramidal structures of the Hindhus, and by the pillars, Jachin and Boaz, of Solomon's temple, wanting.

The origin of the city of Magog is involved in the obscurity of fable. Its temple is attributed by Lucian of Samosata to Deucalion, and as Deucalion was the son of Prometheus or Magog, the city would appear to have borne the name of the founder's father. Gog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal, was admitted to be the progenitor of the Scythian race by all antiquity.

The Caucasus, which derived its name from Goghasan of the Khaldaeans, was also known as the wall of Gog and Magog, the Sidd Yagug (Gog) was Magug (Magog) of the Orientals.

The incursions of the Scythians into Syria appear to have been characterised by the foundation of the city of Magog, and also of that city east of the Sea of

Tiberias, which is variously called Astaroth, Bashan, Basan, and Bathsan, in Holy Writ, but was afterwards called Scythopolis from its inhabitants.

These Scythians were on account of their stature and strength called giants—Anak, pl. Anakim, by the Hebrews. Their king, Og, against whom Ezekiel hurled his denunciations, is also described as a giant.

They were also called by the Greeks and Romans Arimaspes, or one-eyed, from their closing one eye when using the bow. They are particularly described by Ezekiel as using bows and arrows, and as being clothed in all sorts of armour. They had also bucklers and shields, and all of them handled swords.

The intelligent reader will not fail to perceive how closely these descriptions of the Scythians of old, the progenitors of the Celtic or Keltic race, apply to the London effigies of Gog and Magog, of high stature, clothed in all sorts of armour, ‘*æs circa pectus*,’ with swords and shields, besides some ancient British weapons since placed in their hands. These Keltic giants of wickerwork welcomed Philip and Mary on their public entry into London, and formerly constituted part of all civic processions. They hand down, like the ‘grand Dieu’ of Théroutenne, remote traditions of the past.

The Scythian city of Magog—the Kargamus of the Assyrians, Carchemish or Kar-Chemosh of the Hebrews, and the Mabung or Mambey of the Syrians—was conquered, and its form of worship much altered, at the same time that its name was changed, by the successors of Alexander the Great, who disdaining the worship of the luminary of night, introduced the worship of Baal,

and gave to the city the proud name of Hierapolis—the city of the sun.

From that time to the fall of the Roman empire (before which it had resumed its olden name of Mambey, euphonised into Bambuk or Bambyce; and still Bambuch) it continued to play an important part in the wars of the Macedonian succession, and of the Republic of Rome and of its Emperors, against the Persians and Parthians. The visit of Julian to this city is described by Gibbon with a more than usual under-current of partiality for the philosophic—if apostate—emperor.

Another opponent of a then young Christianity, whom Julian had the pleasure of embracing in this city, is called ‘a philosopher and friend, whose religious firmness had withstood the pressing and repeated solicitations of Constantius and Gallus, as often as those princes lodged at his house in their passage through Hierapolis,’ and his epistle from hence to the haughty Libanius is described as ‘displaying the facility of his genius, and his tender friendship for the sophist of Antioch.’

The last of the Romans who for a time upheld the falling empire, and reached Hierapolis, driving the Turkish host before him, was Diogenes Romanus. This bold but unsuccessful warrior, whose feats and death are too succinctly passed over by Gibbon, according to Knolles, the historian of the Turks, built a castle at this city, which he wished to make limitrophal to the rising power of the Seljukians, but the Crescent was then in the ascendant, and the advance of the Moslems into the Holy Land laid the foundation of the first crusade.



The Arabs, I have before observed, whose homes were nowhere apparent, but could not be far off, continued to drop in in increasing numbers during our exploration of the ruins. They did not come more than one or two at a time, and that at intervals, but I remarked from a tower on which I was perched, that before they came to the city, they visited in turns a cemetery which was on the plain and outside the walls, and where one of these swarthy tenants of the wilderness remained as if he was a sentinel.

This old cemetery was at the head of the gap by which we had approached the city, a few hundred yards to the left of the pathway, as we came, and to our right, as, after finishing our explorations, we went back.

Prompted by curiosity, and also partly to see if there were any inscriptions, I left the rest of the party and proceeded to the cemetery, to the evident dissatisfaction of its solitary guardian. To my surprise I found a whole armoury of guns and spears deposited by the side of the tombs, to be had recourse to, I suppose, for defence or attack as circumstances might arise.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE IRON GATES OF THE EUPHRATES.

LEAVING Nesjm Kalah on the first of April, the steamer unfortunately struck upon a bank or shoal some twelve miles south of the castle, and owing to a fall in the waters, was detained until the 19th, when a freshet did what all exertions had failed to do, relieved it from its imprisonment. Two different tribes of Arabs dwelt on the banks of the river at this point, the Beni Fakhal on the Mesopotamian side, and the Beni Sayyid on the Syrian, and they were in hostility the one to the other.

The Sheikh of the Syrian Arabs exerted himself so much in the way of supplies of milk, eggs, and even fowls, that he was one day invited on board by the Colonel, and presented with a single-barrelled gun, which was at his particular request loaded with ball.

On his return, the boat with four seamen, under Mr. Hector, was obliged to row towards the left bank in order to get beyond the island on which we were stranded, and no sooner did it near the shore than the Arabs opened fire at the Sheikh, perfectly regardless of our party, who being unarmed were obliged to shelter themselves in the bottom of the boat. The Sheikh, however, used his new gun with effect. Firing into

the crowd of his assailants, he hit one of them in the arm, breaking the bone above the wrist.

At the same time the transaction being observed from the steamer, a carronade was fired over the heads of the crowd, which had the effect of dispersing it at once, and of relieving our men from their dangerous position. When afterwards we visited the wounded man, his sufferings seemed to be entirely absorbed in the prospect of revenge. 'Inshallah !' he said, 'I shall get well and have my turn.'

The month of April was now going by, and the swallows were actually beginning to build in our paddle boxes, when a slow but steady rise in the waters manifested itself, and one fine morning the steamer began to move, anchors were again carried out, steam was got up, and after a little anxious exertion, the vessel to our infinite satisfaction was liberated and floated away.

We had heard from the Arabs of ruins in the Iron Gates or basaltic pass where were rapids, in which the raft in charge of Fitzjames was unfortunately wrecked, and they called them Kara Bambuch, or the 'black' or 'ruinous' Bambyce.

We found these ruins to occupy the slopes of a basaltic rock, almost peninsulated by a ravine which gradually narrowed upwards, but yawned with open mouth upon the river side.

The ruins were of a most fragmentary character, but the walls of the dwelling-houses, having been built of basaltic rock, were more visible than usual. The town or city presented indeed the appearance of a considerable extent of buildings, that had only recently

been consumed and dismantled by some awful conflagration or other dire catastrophe.

These ruins of dwelling-houses were enclosed within a rude wall which crossed the rocky chasm at its mouth, climbing the broken outline of acclivities on both sides, and sweeping along the crest of the hill to meet and enclose the same chasm at its upper part.

There were no remains which stood prominent, as if belonging to public edifices or to buildings of any importance, but a peculiar character was imparted to this ancient port and town, not only by its situation, but also by tiers of caves, some sepulchral, but most of them having served as dwelling-houses, and which were disposed on the steepest part of the rock, where it crested the ruin-clad acclivities on both sides, but especially on the northern, where they crowded into a lesser chasm or had branched off in that direction.

The ignorance which has hitherto prevailed with regard to this port and pass on the Euphrates has led to unavoidable confusion in history. This ancient pass, although unknown to modern geography till the arrival here of the Expedition, was of considerable importance in ancient times, as well also as during the middle ages. Strabo (xvi. 748) tells us that the merchants going from Syria to Seleucia and Babylon cross the Euphrates in the parallel of Anthemusia in Mesopotamia. 'Four schœni from the river is Bambyce; and when the river is passed the road leads across to Scenæ, or "the tents."'

Isidorus of Charax does not notice Anthemusia among the towns on the Bilecha, with Alama, a fortified

place with a royal mansion, and Ichnæ, 'infamous for the defeat of Crassus;' but Strabo describes it as being near to the pass.

If the pass in question was not at Kara Bambuch, but at Kalah en Nesjm, as is most likely, then Anthemusia may have been in the valley on the opposite side of the river. The Theodosian Tables are in this instance more accurate than Strabo in the distance given of the pass, whether that at Kara Bambuch or that at Nesjm Kalah, from Hierapolis, which they place at twenty-four Roman miles.

It is strange that Strabo, generally so accurate in what refers to his own country, should have said (xvi. 515), 'Bambyce, which is also called Edessa and Hierapolis.' There can be no question, from the history of the crusades, that Edessa was the same as Urfah. What is more amusing is that D'Anville rates Bayer for having misquoted Strabo in the passage alluded to, and as having placed Edessa at a distance of four schoeni from the Euphrates; an error that led him to remark that Bayer '*est un savant que l'érudition n'a point rendu habile en géographie.*'

It is a pity that comparative geography cannot be studied without acerbity of spirit. The error lay with Strabo, and not with Bayer. There is little doubt on comparing the passage at xvi. 7. 48 with that at xvi. 515, that Strabo meant Anthemusia when he wrote Edessa.

There is a greater probability that Julian made use of this pass in transferring his army from Syria to Mesopotamia. Zozimus (iii. 12) relates that the Emperor,

quitting Antioch came to Hierapolis, where he ordered all the boats to be assembled—a statement which has naturally puzzled commentators and critics.

‘*Quis non existimat,*’ says the intelligent Cellarius, ‘*ad Euphraten Hierapolim sitam, ut naves ibi convenire potuerint? Sed longe a flumine reduxit Ptolemæus: Strabo quatuor schœnis.*’

What Zozimus meant was that whether the bridge of boats was at Kalah Nesjm, or at Kara Bambuch, that Julian remained at Hierapolis whilst the said bridge was being constructed, and gave orders from thence, being in close proximity to the river.

His fleet is related to have consisted of eleven hundred vessels, and it must therefore have been in readiness some time previously, and the bridge, according to his historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, was constructed of two rows of boats—‘a double bridge of boats’—fixed by iron chains to the rocks.

The rocks at Kara Bambuch are better adapted for an operation of this kind than at Kalah Nesjm, although it cannot be disputed that there are also rocks, although more or less remote from the river banks and of a different description, at the Castle of the Stars. Another peculiarity which attaches itself to Kara Bambuch is that it still bears the name of Bambyce or Hierapolis, and is looked upon by the Arabs as a kind of adjunct or part of the latter city. The word Kara is used in so many senses by the Arabs, especially as ‘black’ or as ‘ruinous,’ that it is difficult to say in what sense it is used here, for the place is black enough and ruinous enough to merit the expletive in either sense.

Gibbon makes Julian visit Batnæ, the ancient Sarug, before his arrival at Hierapolis. It may have been so, but it is not likely, as the Mesopotamian side of the river was occupied by the enemy, nor do I know whence he derived such a statement.

The Arabian geographers and historians were familiar with what they designated as the 'Jisr,' or 'the bridge,' in this neighbourhood;<sup>1</sup> but as no distances are given, it is difficult to determine whether this bridge was at the 'Castle of the Stars' or at 'Black Bambyce.' Considering, however, that the first was the pass used from Assyrian times; that it was a favourite place of residence of the Abasside and Ayubite dynasties—from El Mamun<sup>2</sup> to Salah-u-din—while the latter presents no Muhammadan remains, we must incline to the site of the castle as that of the 'jisr.' The said 'jisr' was, however, apparently a bridge of boats, for wherever a stone bridge existed—especially if constructed by the Romans—some traces of such are still to be met with, and there are none such observable at the 'Castle of the Stars' or at the 'Black Bambyce.'

It was in this region, on the Syrian side, between the two passes, and in the hill-encompassed plains by which we were surrounded, that Belisarius assembled his motley hosts of Illyrians and Thracians, Heruli and Goths,

<sup>1</sup> The bridge in question is noticed by Golius, in his notes upon the astronomy of Al Fargani (Alfarganius), who resided with the Khalif El Mamun in the castle itself. It is also noticed by Idrisi (Jaubert's *Idrisi*, p. 155, Paris, 1848), and mention is further made of it by Schultens, in the geographical commentary attached to the 'Life of Salah-u-din.'

<sup>2</sup> Abul Abbas El Mamun. Lebrecht 'On the State of the Khalifate.' (Appendix to A. Asher's *Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela*, vol. ii. p. 350.)

and Moors and Vandals, to oppose the progress of Chosroes (Kai Khosrau).

It was on these plains that the unfortunate general pitched his tent of 'coarsest linen' and received the Persian ambassadors, whilst the country around is said to have been hunted by 6,000 horsemen, who pursued their game, indifferent to the proximity of the enemy.

There is little or no game in the country now. We saw neither deer nor antelope, nor even wild boar, so common whenever there is jungle or cover for them. But there were plenty of jackals, foxes, and Tartarian wolves.

The Black ruins especially abounded in the former. No matter at what time they were visited, some were sure to be seen. But while the jackals tumbled about among the stones with an amusing admixture of fun and fear, reynard, of whom an old writer so justly observes, that 'he cannot see right without looking askance,' stood with ears erect, at the mouth of his caverned home, watching the intruder with the usual passionless obliquity of his nature.

In contemplating also for so many days the peculiarities of these Iron Gates, this rock-enclosed passage of the Euphrates, its great adaptability for a bridge of boats, or for a more permanent means of transport, appeared to be only equalled by the great natural advantages which it presents as a post for defence.

Nor do we wonder, on looking at the naked hills beyond and the boundless plains which extend to the extreme verge of the horizon, only spotted here and there, like the skin of a panther, with a few grey shrubs,



that Chosroes should have hesitated to engage in a decisive battle in such a country, and with the great river intervening between him and the enemy. An engagement between the opposing forces was indeed almost impossible under the circumstances.

Still the vast mass of ruined dwelling-houses and inhabited caves accumulated within so small a space, a host of human beings evidently congregated within the walls of a fortress, denote an almost permanent state of insecurity.

The loneliness and peculiarities of the place were brought out most strikingly by moonlight. Under such circumstances, a veil of pleasing softness was drawn over the rough features of shattered walls and crumbling buildings, so as almost to transform them to a perfect state and harmonious arrangement. All that was desolate and diffuse when seen by the broad daylight, became in the semi-obscurity of night almost perfect and elaborate.

The climbing walls, the rugged piles of towers and the tiers of caverns, alternately buried or brought out by passing lights and shades, were both magnified and multiplied by the dark shadows which they cast upon one another, and the whole scene assumed a character of mysterious and wild beauty which increased with the distance till the fading outline sunk into the bed of the river, as if into the depths of a fathomless abyss. The deep waters of the great river, rushing through these dark basaltic rocks, were indeed as black and ominous looking as was 'Black Bambyce' itself.

## CHAPTER V.

## A PARADISE OF THE PERSIANS.

WE passed on joyfully from the scene of a prolonged detention and of serious losses—Iron Gates not so long nor so formidable as those of the Danube, but sufficiently so to us—into more open country.

The ‘Tigris’ steamer, which had been set free by the same happy rise in the waters as had given us our liberty, came up with us in the pass, and being the lighter of the two vessels, was left to endeavour to recover some of the objects lost in the wreck of the raft; but the waters were far too deep, and the rush through the rock-bound chasm far too swift, to allow of much success. The banks of the river became, outside of the ridge of basalt, low and level, with at first stony plains, out of which, on the Mesopotamian side, rose a large isolated mass of rock which appeared to be hollowed like a monolithic temple.

Beyond this the river took a long westerly bend between low ranges of chalk hills, which terminated on the Syrian side in a mound of ruin or debris. This was the site of Eragiza of Ptolemy or Erachiha of the Theodosian Tables, which latter place is at a distance of twenty-five Roman miles from Hierapolis and sixteen from Bar-

balissus. The Muhammadans had as usual erected a holy man's tomb or sepulchral chapel on its summit, but we did not stop to explore the traces of the ancient site. The tomb was designated as that of Sheikh 'Arūdi, but the name appears to have as much affinity with the olden name of the place as with that of a sheikh.

The country now began to expand into open grassy plains, which stretched away as far as the eye could reach. These were occupied, on the Mesopotamian side by the Beni Fakh al Arabs, who from their vast numbers presented a scene such as we had not only not hitherto witnessed, but had not anticipated, and which positively filled us with wonder and astonishment. The encampment extended, in fact, for several miles across the plain. It was indeed like the encampment of an army, while all around the plain were groups of camels, or herds of buffaloes, cattle, and sheep.

The excitement which the advent of the steamer occasioned added in no small degree to the strangeness of the scene. Men, women, and children were seen to stretch in lines or groups along the whole length of the encampment, but the warriors were hastening, some to their horses, others to the tent of the Sheikh, while a few were already mounted, and cantered along the banks of the river, brandishing their spears as if in defiance.

The ordinary home of the Beni Fakh al tribe was at Balis, on the Syrian side of the river; but they had fled before the exactions of Ibrahim Pasha into Mesopotamia, and had thus withdrawn themselves from his

rule. This was apparently the cause of the anxiety and excitement exhibited at our appearance, for they fancied that the Pasha had found some new means of reaching them. No doubt they were also banded together in unusual numbers for purposes of defence. The necessities of food for their camels and cattle generally lead to a greater distribution of tents over a wider area.

Passing the great encampment of Arabs, the steamer brought to in a narrow but deep creek between the mainland and a shrub-clad island. This was immediately below some low chalk cliffs, which extended thence in a southerly direction, to approach the river again and constitute a promontory at a distance of some ten miles.

The river itself wound in a south-easterly and then southerly direction, thus leaving between it and the high ground a vast hawi or cultivable plain, which was once the site of the paradise or hunting park of the Persian satrap Belesis, and which was devastated and destroyed by the younger Cyrus.

The ruins of the town of Balis and 'the port of the Syrians,' according to Abû-l-fada were about two miles away, nigh the centre, and in the rear of the lowlands, but at a point where evidently a branch of the Euphrates once left the main river from the creek we were in, to flow past the town and port, and pass out again lower down.

This canal appears to correspond to the Daradax of Xenophon, which that historian describes as being a plethrum in width at its origin, and which from that

circumstance could hardly have been a spring ; besides that the same writer describes another channel or derivative from the river, lower down, as the river Masca, under precisely similar circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

We have the additional testimony of Golius as to the existence of this canal, and he quotes the authority of Yakut, that in his time—that is to say the eighteenth century of the Christian era—the Euphrates had insensibly left Balis at a distance of several miles. This would indicate that the said canal was once the main bed of the river, but the configuration of the country is against such a supposition.

Balis, the old port of Syria, is still the port of Aleppo, from which city it is distant some fifty miles, and as we had to enter into communication with, and receive stores from that commercial centre, we remained at this interesting spot for a short time.

The ruins of the old town of Balis were partly Roman and partly Muhammadan. The chief remnant of the former epoch was a square tower, with a wall twelve feet thick, but gradually falling to pieces. One side had completely given way, but it was afterwards partly repaired and provided with a doorway by the expedition of Lynch and Campbell, and was made a dépôt.

The ruins of Muhammadan times were more numerous and almost as conspicuous ; among them being a handsome minar or tower of three stories, rising from a square base of seventy-five feet, and having an interior

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Chesney identifies the Daradax with the Nahr el Dahab, or 'Golden River.' See Appendix 10.

staircase, several sepulchral chapels, Saracenic arches, and fragments of other edifices and structures.

The day after our arrival I took a lonely stroll to these ruins, and I found some Roman copper coins deposited on a slab in one of the sepulchral chapels. They had no doubt been found by the Arabs and placed there as offerings. On my way I passed an Arab cemetery and stopped a moment, my attention being attracted by tresses of women's hair being attached to sticks over the graves of females. I must have been watched by the Arabs, for the next day the tresses were all removed. It was, possibly, to screen them from the evil eye of an infidel; or was it that they thought I should appropriate the memorials of the dead?

The name of Balis, as well as the classical rendering of the name of the Persian satrap Belesis, appears to be derived from the well known Bel or Ba'al.

The learned commentators of Pancoucke's Pliny (by far the best edition of his works) attached so much importance to this place from its name, as to advocate its being the site of the temple of Bel, which the Roman historian alludes to as existing long after the destruction of Babylon; but the distance given of the temple in question from Babylon identifies it with Borsippa, now Birs Nimrūd (Notes to Book IV. p. 318).

The identification of the place with the scriptural P'thora by Benjamin of Tudela, is said by his commentator, Asher, to have been probably occasioned by the legend attached to the tower, that it was built by Bileam, 'of whose abode we know nothing more than that it was situated on the Euphrates.'

‘Even at this day,’ Benjamin of Tudela says, ‘you there still find remains of the tower of Balaam the son of Beor (May the name of the wicked rot!) which he built in accordance with the hours of the day.’ According to the same traveller, Balis contained about ten Jews in his time, A.D. 1163.

By some curious permutations, the origin of which is not easily accounted for, but which stumble upon one at every step in studying the comparative geography of the Low Empire and of the middle ages, Balis is designated by the name of Barbarissus by Ptolemy, and is written Barbalissus in the Theodosian Tables.

The Ayubite prince and geographer Abû-l-fada notices the town under the name of Balis as a station for the vessels intending to descend the Euphrates in order to reach Irak Arabi (Khaldæa). This was in the latter part of the thirteenth century (‘Abulphedæ Tabula Syriæ,’ pp. 65, 130).

According to Desguignes (iii. a. 110) the place was taken by the crusaders under Tancred in 1111, but was reconquered by the Turks under Zenghi (Zenghis Khan).

Muhammadan tradition attributes the downfall of the place to a church schism in the sixteenth century.

A certain dissenter from the received versions of the Kuran, expelled from Lesser Asia for his unorthodox tenets, took refuge at this place, where he offered to prove the accuracy of his doctrine to the Wuzîr of Aleppo by the usual test of a miracle.

For this purpose a manuscript copy of the Kuran

and a virgin book, that is a book not written upon, were buried in a certain place, where they were carefully shut up and the place sealed. After forty days' assiduous prayer, the books were reproduced and the blank pages were found to be occupied by a version of the Kuran with such alterations as the dissenter advocated.

Henceforward the ingenious propounder of miracles was known as Shaïtan Kūli, which may be politely translated as the servant of Satan, but great dissensions sprang up between his followers and the Mullahs and Kazileh, the ecclesiastical authorities of Aleppo, and which culminated in a terrible slaughter of the latter at morning prayers.

The Sultan Sulaiman I. was so exasperated by this method of disposing of a polemical dispute, that he ordered an army to be sent to Aleppo and Balis, to put all the inhabitants without distinction to death, but the people of Aleppo were saved from destruction by the intervention of the Wuzîr, who was a humpbacked son of the Sultan's and hence designated as Aî-Anjur, 'the bearer of the world.' The Oriental idea of an Atlas was apparently more simple than the long disputed ἀμφὶς ἔχουσι of the father of poetry. Balis, however, fell irrecoverably, and as the seeds of dissent were smothered but not extinguished, and a double slaughter had not either proved or disproved the new commentary, the 'bearer of the world' was disposed of by poison in the campaign of 1553.

What between the advent of spring and the descent of the river, we found ourselves at Balis getting almost into a new world, in as far as the objects of



nature were concerned by which we were surrounded. A more fitting place for a palace and hunting-park, or 'paradises' as they were termed, of a Persian satrap, could not be imagined. The word *paradise*, it is to be observed, is of Persian origin and was adopted by the Greeks. It meant originally a park or pleasure-ground. It was afterwards applied to the Garden of Eden, and subsequently was adopted as a name for the world of happiness hereafter—either the heavenly state or the world of disembodied spirits—to where the souls of the just spend the interval between death and the resurrection (Luke xxiii. 43 ; 2 Cor. xii. 4 ; Rev. ii. 7). Hence the Romanists view the paradise of the Gospels in the light of a general purgatory or place of purging from sins.

It was in this paradise of the Persians that the tamarisk, with its fine pointed leaves and deep green tinge, and which afterwards constituted the chief part of the jungle along the banks of the river, first made its appearance. The circumscription, or rather the predominance of a peculiar vegetation in different spots, was very remarkable. Some tracts were covered with cochlearia, others solely with pansies, others with grass and sedges and some bushes. Many of the flowers of spring, belonging to families rich in beautiful forms—as the *Amaryllidæ*, *Asphodeliæ*, *Liliacæ*, and *Melanthaceæ*—were also marked by a gorgeousness of colour which spoke of a climate becoming truly Oriental.

Animals and birds became more numerous. Lynch alone stumbled upon a specimen of the monarch of the forest, but wild boars, jackals, and foxes, especially

the former, were very numerous. Almost immediately after our arrival, a boar, sow, and a young pig were driven out of the little island close by and took to the water, but the men gave chase in a boat and all three were captured and killed. On another occasion, being out shooting with Colonel Chesney and Charlewood, we turned up fourteen pigs in one bit of jungle, one of which was shot, whilst an old sow making directly towards me, who had only small shot in my fowling-piece, caused me, a novice in the sport, no little amount of trepidation.

A marked feature was imparted to the same spot also by the first appearance on the river of that beautiful game-bird, the francolin (*Tetrao francolinus*), of the same size and very like our own pheasant, but without a long tail, and with a white ring round the neck in the male bird. I fancied I had seen them in the copses near Alexandretta; but as I did not shoot one, and only saw them at a distance, they may have been pheasants. Landrails and quails were also met with. Nubian geese, pelicans, and cormorants occasionally sped their way up the waters. Flocks of storks assembled at pools formed by the subsidence of the river. Numerous hawks frequented the cliffs, and owls moped among the ruins or sat blinking at the gambols of the young foxes. There were also doves, larks, finches, the beautiful bee-eater, and the green crow,

The green birds that dwell  
In radiant fields of asphodel.

But by far the most curious animal that we now first met with was a gigantic lizard, of the genus

Ameiva or Monitor, which dwelt in holes on the banks of the river. This animal was well known to antiquity. Pliny (viii. 9) notices them as ‘lacerti Arabiæ cubitales,’ upon which Cuvier remarked that the monitor is known to exceed that length.<sup>1</sup>

I have already made mention (in connection with this great lizard) of the amusing combat that is described by Bertrandon de la Brocquière as occurring between two knights and one of these reptiles, as also of the vexed question as to the existence of crocodiles in Western Asia.

The ancients and mediæval writers certainly allude to such, as also to Crocodile Rivers and Lakes. It is possible that they are now exterminated. But it is more likely they were great lizards. We met with no crocodiles on the Euphrates, although one day Sergeant-major Quin came running up to me hastily, to point out a gigantic lizard which had all the appearance of a crocodile, and which was at that moment taking the water from off a sandbank, several hundred yards away from the steamer. But as no reptiles of that description were met with during the descent of the river, I am inclined to think it must have been a monitor to which the faint light on the horizon had lent additional proportions.

That carnivorous and fierce reptile of the turtle tribe—the *Trionyx Euphratica*, as it is called, being peculiar to this river—was also now met with. I have seen two or three gorging themselves upon the dead body of an antelope that was floating down the stream.

<sup>1</sup> One dug out of its hole at Balis measured 2 ft. 7 in. The average length was from 2½ ft. to 3 ft.

The Arabs at Balis were an unsocial and thievish set—probably outcasts of some of the great tribes. On one occasion two or three of these bold marauders sprang out of the sedges and captured the person of Corporal Greenhill, who was taking a walk not far from the steamer. The corporal, being unarmed, was bereft of his regimental brass buttons, which the Arabs no doubt thought might be made of gold.

A sad accident occurred upon another occasion. There were some low rounded hills at the head of the channel we were anchored in, between it and the chalk cliffs. An alarm being given one day that the Arabs were among these hillocks, a party turned out, myself among the number, to drive them away. This was soon accomplished, but Fitzjames, who was playfully running down a hill side, twisted his foot and broke the small bone of his leg. We had to have him conveyed on board ship, where he lay disabled for a long time, and what was worse, the usual results of confinement manifested themselves in a bad attack of malarious fever. The interpreter, Yusuf Sáada, who had been sent to Aleppo for funds, was also (or said he was), robbed of them on his way back.

Durwish Ali was sent on a mission to some of the Sheikhs dwelling in the neighbourhood, and he induced them to pay the Colonel a visit.

These Sheikhs were comparatively speaking young men, and they were somewhat effeminate in their manners. Their hair was plaited like that of females, but the expression of the eyes was open and pleasing. There was at the same time no want of Oriental repose

and dignity. Nor were they wanting in dissimulation. The Colonel having ordered the carronade to be fired, so that they might see the shot fall on the river, they begged that it might not be repeated; they were so terrified! Their most earnest requests were for aphrodisiacs, and they were told to indulge in truffles and morels, of which, by the bye, the Arabs above the Iron Gates used to procure plenty.

A treaty of peace, amity, and good-will was drawn up by these chiefs of the Anizeh on the one hand, and by the Colonel, in the name of his sovereign, on the other, and duly signed, but all attempts to persuade them to entertain friendly feelings towards the Shammar or Mesopotamian Arabs were vain. 'Our fathers have left us that blood feud to fight out,' they exclaimed, 'and we cannot desecrate their beards.'

## CHAPTER VI.

## MIZARI TURK—‘THE TURK’S BURIAL-PLACE.’

THE ‘Tigris’ steamer left Balis on May 3, and was followed by the ‘Euphrates’ on the morning of the 7th. Passing the promontory south of Balis, with Sheikh Hussein’s tomb on its crest, we came to another fertile plain, the place of encampment of Sheikh Omar. There is a camel ford across the river at this place in the summer season.

We now came in sight of the Abû Bara or Abû Hararah hills, which stretch from west to east, causing the river also to take an easterly bend, till it also, much encumbered with islands in this stretch, is brought to by the Jaber hills—the right bank, at the foot of the Abû Bara hills, being low, is cultivated by the Wulda Arabs.

Some variety is given to the Abû Bara hills, which although only a few hundred feet in height, have a tame woodless outline, by the presence of Sheikhs’ tombs and a minar or tower on their summit. But the most remarkable ruin is that of a castle of considerable dimensions, which stands on a rock on the Mesopotamian side, at the east end of the reach, and which was separated from the adjacent hills, constituting as it were a rocky peninsula. This castle is known as Kalah Jaber.

We found the 'Tigris' lying to at the eastern end of the stretch, and as we also brought to for a short time on the Syrian side of the river, I took advantage of the delay to examine the Abû Bara range, which was found to be composed of marls and gypsum. We had now got to the head of that vast deposit of gypsum which was to accompany us, with intervals of supra-cretaceous limestones and marls, for so great a distance down the river.

Unfortunately I had no opportunity of exploring the castle on the left bank. It appeared to be in a very ruinous condition, but picturesque in its round towers and crumbling walls, crowning a rock terrace apparently of gypsum, supported by sloping and shingly acclivities of more friable marls.

On the same side of the river, after it has assumed a more southerly course, is a mound of ruin, also called Abû Jaber, and beyond this a monastic ruin known as Deir Mahariz.

Benjamin of Tudela, who calls this latter place Sela Mid Bara, the last part of which name applies, as we have seen, to the adjacent range of hills, gives a strange account of it, the first part of which is utterly incredible. The Rabbi describes the place as a city containing in his time, A.D. 1163, about 2,000 Jews, of whom Rabbi Zedekiah, Rabbi Chia, and Rabbi Solomon were the heads, and the place remained in the hands of the Arabs even at the time when the Thogarmin (Turks) took their country and dispersed them in the desert.

When we put Kalah Jaber, Abû Jaber, Sela Mid Bara or Deir Mahariz, with the land now cultivated by

the Wulda Arabs, and the Bara hills dotted with ruins, all together—they may, however, have once been the centre of a large population.

Kalah Jaber, although most interesting in its relation to the Turks, is a site also of ancient date.

The Ayubite geographer calls it Kalah Jaber ('Abulphedæ Tabula Syriæ,' pp. 65 and 130), but Golius also adds that it was called Dauser, after its founder, a chief under one of the Mundars. This must have been one of the early princes of that Christian dynasty of Hira which under its first king, designated as Malik or 'the king' *par excellence*, captured Irak or Babylonia from the Persians about A.D. 210.

The conquests on the Euphrates and Tigris were, however, only consolidated by his successors, Judaimah and Amru I., the last of whom particularly distinguished himself by surprising the strongly fortified and highly embellished city of Al Hadhr or Atra, in the heart of Mesopotamia, and at that time governed by a heroine of the name of Zabba.

Stephanus of Byzantium also notices the castle by the name of Dausara, and it is related of the Emperor Julian by his historian Ammianus Marcellinus, that on quitting Charræ (Haran) he made a pretence as if he were going towards the Tigris, but turning suddenly to the right, he reached Dauana 'a presidential castle,' 'Unde ortus Belias fluvius funditur in Euphratem.'<sup>1</sup>

The 'Equites Mauri Illyricani Dabanæ,' who must have been relics of the army of Belisarius, are mentioned

<sup>1</sup> This by error. The Belias or Bilecha joins the Euphrates at Callinicus, whither Julian is described as proceeding the next day.



in the ‘*Notitiæ Imperii*’ as under the Duke of Osrhoene, and Procopius (ii. 4) also notices the same place as the castle of Dabanas.

Sulaiman, son of Kutelmish and grandson of Seljuk—founder of the dynasty of that name—and one of the chiefs of the Ughuz Turks, who contributed more than his predecessors, Toghrul Bey, Alp Arslan, or Malik Shah to spread the sway of the Turks in Syria and Mesopotamia, was drowned near this site.

He is described as arriving at the banks of the river at the head of a large army, and impatient at this obstacle thrown in the way to his progress, to have leapt into the stream on horseback, and both chieftain and horse were carried away by the current.

An Oriental poet, in allusion to this act of impetuous folly, says—

Since he the river Saile did not love,  
He in that very river met his death.

The body of the sultan was with difficulty recovered, and he is said to have been buried at Kalah Jaber. Knolles, in his ‘*History of the Turks*,’ calls it Ziabar castle, and he adds that it had been previously reduced by Sulaiman, and that after the burial of that chieftain it was called Mezari Zuruk. D’Herbelot says that it was called Mizari Turk, or ‘the Turk’s burial-place.’

Zuruk appears to have been the origin of the word Turk—which is indeed only used by Europeans.

Sultan Selim is said to have erected a mausoleum at the spot where the remains of his great ancestor reposed, and a monastery of Durwishes was founded at

the same place by the great Sheikh Abû Bekir. Now the remains of this monastery are met with at Deir Mehariz, or 'the monastery of the burial-place'—the Sela Mid Bara of Benjamin, and therefore this would seem most likely to have been the place of burial, if not also of the death—for no one would have thought of attempting to pass the river between the hills of Abû Bara and Jaber castle.

The error in confounding the two places, not far from one another but still very distinct, as the burial-place of Sulaiman, propagated by Knolles and d'Herbelot, has found its way into modern works, as in the 'History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire, by Demetrius Cantemir, Prince of Moldavia, translated by Tindall, London, 1734' (p. 5).

The fact, like many others, could only be determined, or indeed brought to light, by an actual examination of the locality.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THAPSACUS—THE FATAL PASS.

FOR the first time since the descent of the river commenced, the two steamers started together from this interesting spot. The bed of the river was so deep that the precaution hitherto taken of sending on a boat ahead to take soundings was dispensed with; but the 'Tigris,' which was only supposed to draw eighteen inches of water, took the lead, so that in case she passed over a shoal not feasible to the larger steamer, which drew three feet of water, a warning might be communicated.

The rocky cliffs on the Mesopotamian side of the river continued to encroach upon the stream, till at a point a few miles below Deir Mahariz they met a promontory from the other side, and gave birth to a rapid known as Anaidi Mukada. A little beyond this was the Wadi Sahel, remarkable for two mounds of ruin. The site is now known as Ethdheim.

We advanced beyond this into a low wooded region, and having navigated the river without accident, brought to at a wooded island, where we could obtain a little spare fuel, and the next day being Sunday (May 8) a general repose was given to the crews.

Among the trees that most abounded were a species of lanceolate-leaved aspen or poplar, whose seed vessels were, as with our own species, covered, but more abundantly so, with a kind of cotton which made excellent beds for the Arabs. They call the tree Gharab. There were also wild mulberry trees, and below these was a dense undergrowth of tamarisk.

I was somewhat amused and surprised at meeting with the domestic sparrow in the island. Either the latter had been formerly inhabited, or was so occasionally.

I was also fortunate enough, in roaming about, to accidentally find a new and curious small quadruped of the *Gerbillus* genus, a species of which has already been described by Pallas as inhabiting tamarisk woods. This poor creature had been transfixed through the tail by a powerful thorn, and having fallen in its endeavours to extricate itself, had been unable to regain the branch, and must have thus suffered a lingering and painful death. This was a much larger animal than that described by Pallas, being seventeen inches in length.

On the evening of May 9 the steamer dropped down the river, free of the woods, and brought to along gravelly banks, in the holes of which the Nubian geese were at this season of the year nesting.

At this point some brick ruins were met with on a projecting headland, and beyond these, long lines of mounds of debris, enclosing hewn stones and kiln-dried bricks, were all that remained of the once renowned city of Thipsach or Thapsacus, from whence Solomon held dominion over all the regions on this side the river,

even to Gazzah (1 Kings iv. 24). This Thipsach, 'a pass or ford' of the Hebrews, became the Thapsacus of the Greeks and Romans. Ptolemy justly observes that the pass was not at Thapsacus itself, but 'vada juxta Thapsacum.'

From hence Colonel Chesney and myself, accompanied by the pilot and two seamen, started in an open boat to visit the pass or ford itself, and still known as Phumsah, and as 'the ford of the Bedawin.'

The river beyond the ruined site takes an almost due easterly course as far as Rakka, its waters expanding into almost lake-like proportions. The right bank is low and gravelly, and presents no remarkable features, but on the left bank a long tract of more or less wooded land, with occasional towers or fragments of ruin, stretches some miles inland towards distant low cliffs.

The Euphrates is at this spot full of beauty and majesty—no wonder that Harūn al Rāshīd made of Rakka, at its extremity, one of his favourite places of residence—but owing to its thus widening its bed to such an extent, it is a mere series of pools with a connecting stream in the dry months of the year. Hence, though favourable to ford, the steamers 'Nimrod' and 'Nitocris' were, on the ascent of the river in October 1841, detained here until the month of February of the ensuing year.

Landing on the right bank, we soon found traces of an ancient paved causeway which led from the city to where was the ford, and was continued on the other side. We also found pieces of solid masonry in the bed of the river, so that there had evidently been a bridge

of boats here in olden times. The Arabs call them Rasasah, because the fastenings of the bridge to the piers were clamped with lead.

The causeway at Thapsacus is of great antiquity. It is marked on the Augustan and Theodosian Tables, and was carried all the way from Auranitis, by Palmyra, Resapha, and Sura (Thapsacus) to Carrhæ or Haran, and Edessa. When Al Mundar, Christian prince of Hira, was restored by Nurshivan, after his deposition by Kei Kobad, the Gassanite prince Arethas appealed to the Latin name *strata* of this paved causeway as an unquestionable evidence of the labours and sovereignty of the Romans.

Out of the woods on the opposite side rose a castellated building, called Arakla by the Arabs, and apparently ancient Zenodotium, on the prolongation of the causeway northwards.

Pliny describes this magnificent reach of the Euphrates as one where the wayfarer quitted the Palmyrean solitudes for fertile Mygdonia, and no doubt in ancient times the long tract of fertile land now covered with brushwood, and which stretches from Thapsacus to Nicephorium, 'the city of victory' of the Macedonians; Callinicus, one day's journey from Dauana, of Julian; and the Rakka of Harūn al Rāshīd, was one continuous garden, as, like the 'paradise of Balis,' it might again be under a stable government.

Solomon appears to have founded, or obtained possession of 'Thipsach,' the ford, in connection with the series of operations of which the building or fortification of Tadmor, at a spring in the desert, was one,

adopted with the view of drawing the eastern trade from Mesopotamia on the one side and from Babylonia on the other, to his own dominions, and the Romans brought the same lines of communication to a higher degree of perfection.

According to Gosselin, the merchants of Egypt and Syria passed in ancient times the Euphrates at Thapsacus, from whence they proceeded by Ecbatana to the Caspian Gates. This is a very long route indeed, but why this line of road was selected in olden times, and became so celebrated in history, was because, first, there was a ford, secondly the bend of the river is the most favourable point to pass from the south-east to the north-west, and thirdly, because the valley of the Bilecha (Strabo's 'Royal river'), dotted with towns, offered a safe road, in so far as water and provisions were concerned, to Haran and Edessa.

It is extraordinary in contemplating the different fortunes of those who crossed this pass, as invaders, conquerors, or in flight, how much that is fatal attaches to them. It is so remarkable, that it would appear as if a sad fatality attached itself to this otherwise beautiful and favoured spot.

First came the hosts of Xerxes, speeding their onward way to overthrow a young and rising civilisation. The conflagration of Athens, and the engagements of Salamis, Plataea, and Mycale, stand among the list of fatalities that followed upon this invasion from across the Euphrates.

The misled Greeks and barbarians, collected by Cyrus the younger for the purpose of overthrowing his

brother Artaxerxes, followed in the van. Cyrus, in the march in Asia Minor, by Sardis and Celænæ, followed the footsteps of his predecessor, and crossed the Euphrates at the same point. Thapsacus is described by Xenophon as being then a large and flourishing city.

It was here that the troops were first informed that they were going against the Great King. Xerxes, who according to Herodotus, crossed the Hellespont by a bridge of boats, in which one was tied to another, had constructed a similar one at Thapsacus, but this was destroyed by Abrocomas on the approach of Cyrus. Anxious to show his allegiance, Menon first led his gallant Thessalians across the stream, the waters of which did not reach above the men's breasts.

The whole army followed the example thus set to them, and the flattering Israelites declared that the river was never fordable before, and that it visibly submitted to Cyrus, as to its future king. And what was the result? The death of Cyrus on the plain of Cunaxa, killed probably by his own brother, whom he had just wounded, and the disastrous but memorable retreat of the ten thousand Greeks.

The favourite mistress of Cyrus, Milto by name, but whom, in honour of her wit and beauty, he designated his Aspasia, crossed the Euphrates with the army, and was left behind as the fair embodiment of discord.

Beloved by Artaxerxes, she was asked of him by his son Darius on the occasion of his being declared successor to the throne, and when it was customary to ask a favour which was never refused.

The king told his son, that if she consented to be



his he should not oppose it; and Milto declared in favour of the son, which so displeased Artaxerxes that he doomed her to perpetual chastity in the temple of Anaitis or Diana. This, on the other hand, so exasperated Darius that he conspired to put his father to death, but the design being discovered, it ended in his own destruction, and he became the second princely victim of the passage of the Euphrates.

The unfortunate Darius, surnamed Codoman, advanced by Thapsacus to resist the invading legions of Alexander the Great; but defeated at Issus, he was allowed to retreat leisurely and destroy the bridge, whilst the Macedonian hero besieged Tyre and advanced into Egypt. Alexander, however, arrived at Thapsacus in his turn, on his way to subject the Oriental world.

He crossed the river, according to some, by means of a double bridge, made fast at both sides of the river; but according to Arrian, by a succession of boats slung crosswise and retained in that position by great osier panniers, full of heavy stones, sunk in the stream. The connection between the boats was then established by means of two planks fastened together. Such were the Macedonian pontoons. It appears, however, that he afterwards crossed the Indus by a bridge of contiguous boats after the Persian fashion.

And what was the result? Darius was miserably murdered by Bessus, and Alexander himself died subsequently in an equally sad manner at Babylon. This event changed the fate of the existing world. The foundation of an empire, with that ancient city for its centre, was—by an interposition of Providence some-

what similar to that which ensured the first dispersion of nations—frustrated, and its different territories broken up among his rival generals.

Alexander, as was his custom, celebrated his successful passage of the Euphrates by founding a city at the site of Rakka, which he called Nicephorium, or ‘the city of victory,’ and under the Seleucidæ Thapsacus was restored and embellished and became Amphipolis. Four centuries afterwards Trajan offered oblations at the grave of Alexander, and a century later Severus sealed up his desecrated tomb.<sup>1</sup>

The next who came to pass the fatal bridge was Crassus, the haughty representative of the Roman Republic in the East. Ominous events had foretold evil on his quitting the despoliated Hierapolis. His son had fallen, and he stumbled over him at the gateway of the rich and sacred city of the Syrians; and these events, combined with other ill omens, filled his mind with melancholy forebodings.

Dion Cassius relates that Crassus ‘crossed the Euphrates at Zeugma; thus the place was called from the expedition of Alexander who crossed at this place.’ Plutarch also says he began his march along the side of the river, till he gained the ford by which he could cross to Nicephorium (Rakka). Once here, he could follow the valley of the Bilecha to Carrhæ (Haran).

But after leaving the river, he is said to have been led astray by the wiles of Abgarus, the Armenian king

<sup>1</sup> The tomb or sarcophagus of Alexander has recently been stated to have been discovered at Sidon. If so it must have been on its way to be transported to Egypt.

of Edessa, and the events of Carrhæ (*Carræ clade Crassi nobiles*) determined that the fate of the next trans-Euphrates invader should not differ from the others. 'By his miserable death, Crassus stained with his Latian blood the Assyrian Carræ' (Lucanus, lib. i. ver. 104).

Julian led the most numerous army that ever accompanied the Cæsars to Persia, across the Euphrates, and he too had a warning when, at Hierapolis, the gate of the holy city fell, killing fifty soldiers. When at Carrhæ, he was much troubled with dreams, and another sad omen occurred, for the day of his march from Carrhæ to the Chaboras, the temple of Apollo Palatine was burnt at Rome.

Following the example of Trajan, he joined his fleet at the mouth of the Chaboras and descended the Euphrates, when his fleet was nearly destroyed by a hurricane from the desert, on which occasion many boats were sunk and many lives lost. This seems to be a not uncommon occurrence on the 'Great River.'

Mortally wounded on the plains of Ctesiphon, the Christians relate that he threw the blood streaming from his wound into the air, exclaiming, in vexation of spirit, 'Hold, Nazarene! there is enough to satiate thee!' The Pagan historians are, however, silent as to such an occurrence.

The fatality attendant upon the passage of the Euphrates did not end here, for Jovian, his successor, perished miserably on the retreat at Dadastana, a small town on the frontiers of Galatia and Bithynia.

The first time that Nicephorium is mentioned under the name of Callinicus, is in the account given by

Eutropius of the campaign of Galerius. This so far lends force to the statement made by Valesius, that it was so-called because Callinicus the sophist was slain there; for this Callinicus, surnamed Suetonius, lived in the time of Galerius. In the chronicles of Alexander, it is said, however, to have been so named after Seleucus Callinicus.

Galerius only crossed the river to be ignobly defeated, and the unfortunate Gordianus passed the river at the same fatal point, to be assassinated by Philip, surnamed the Arabian.

The tomb of the emperor still existed in the time of Julian, and is described as being in an olive grove to the south of the Chaboras. According to Ammianus sixty stadia below the river, but according to Eutropius and Sextus Rufus, twenty Roman miles distant.

Luckily the Khalifs had not to cross the Euphrates in order to reach Rakka.

At the decline of the Khalifat, however, Togrul Bey, the first of the Seljukian Sultans, having driven the Arabs before him, crossed the Euphrates at Thapsacus, and was invested at Rakka, as conqueror of the Gasnevites, and in great solemnity, with the title of Khalif, which comprehends the concrete character of prophet, priest, and king, and was used to signify the vicar of God. This was a fatality of a most serious complexion—it was the first and prophetic step in the overthrow of the Byzantine Empire, and led the way to four centuries of Muhammadan domination in Europe.

It is not quite clear if Sulaiman was not drowned at this place, for some historians speak of his having

thrown himself into the stream on horseback, because the bridge no longer existed. But if this was the case, his remains would have been more likely removed to Rakka, and not so far away as to Mahariz, unless some peculiar sanctity attached itself to the monastery of Abû Bekir.

As Colonel Chesney and I stood on the banks of the river, the two steamers came past in stately procession on their way to Rakka. It was a pretty sight to watch these pioneers of civilisation wending their way so silently yet so effectually amid these vast solitudes.

But alas! the same fate awaited one of them that befell Julian's fleet. Only twelve days afterwards, the 'Tigris' was engulfed in the unsparing depths of the great river, and nineteen lives lost, and as if the fatality attendant upon this fatal passage was not to end here, the great Expedition itself was never to be followed up by a once enterprising and conquering country.

Thapsacus became Sura in the time of the Low Empire, and it is so called by Pliny and by Ptolemy. It is also so written in the Tables and in the 'Notitiæ' of the Oriental Empire, and it was also designated as 'Flavia firma Sura.' We have seen that the ruins are still called Suriyeh. With the rise of the Muhammadan power, Nicephorium and Callinicus became Rakka 'the Illustrious.' Harûn al Râshîd erected, besides a citadel and other buildings, a summer palace at the place, and was accustomed to dwell there with his favourite wife, Zobeidah, 'with,' the Oriental chroniclers add, 'great delight.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE PALACE OF HARŪN AL RĀSHĪD.

THERE is nothing like being alone in an excursion in wild countries. When there are two or three, there is noise and conversation, and beast, bird, or reptile shuns the proximity of mankind. But be alone, they are less timid or have courage. As a lover of nature, I used afterwards always to prefer being by myself when exploring the jungle of the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers. Animals and birds would get out of my way, but they seemed to be very little disturbed by my presence, and I would meet with many, where if others had been there, I should have met with none.

The presence of a friend is unquestionably delightful under most circumstances, for sociality, for sympathy, and even for safety; but it is surprising what a difference it makes among animals and birds, if there is only one, or many.

I never realised the fact more than upon the occasion of my first visit to the palace of Harūn al Rāshīd. The steamer had brought to for the night off a site called Rafika, or 'the retreat,' an Arab village near the river. The ruins of Rakka lay about a mile off to the north-east.

I started off early in the morning to explore these ruins alone, and had not proceeded far before I found my way intercepted by a stagnant ditch. Here I came to what was to me a perfect novelty, an army of locusts. They were especially abundant this year. From being only an inch in length at Balis, they were now an inch and six-eighths, and the wings advanced another eighth beyond the body. By the time we got to Deir, they had taken wing and appeared like clouds in the sky. Now they were marching, and all that had arrived first at the ditch were drowned, till they formed a bridge of their carcasses, over which others advanced to meet with a similar fate. Whether the bridge was ultimately completed, till some gained the opposite bank, I had not time to stop to see.

This very spring Ibrahim Pasha organised a raid against these destructive insects, and for this purpose he enlisted all the able-bodied inhabitants of Aleppo, assisted by the garrison of the place, to work at their extermination. The bazaars were closed, the markets neglected, and almost every one, young or old, was obliged to join in the attempt to destroy them before they took wing.

This will remind the classical reader that in Cyrenaica the law enjoined three annual *Locustrades*; the first for the destruction of the eggs, the second against the young, and the third against the perfect insect. In the island of Lemnos it was even determined by law what measure each inhabitant should bring, as a proof of his zeal. Having with some difficulty circumvented the ditch, I came up to the walls of the city, which were lofty and

embattled. Here another extraordinary sight presented itself, the top of the wall being lined with black ibises. Whether they had taken flight from the marshes and settled here upon my approach, or whether this was a usual place for perching, I could not determine. I had not seen any on the wing.

Keeping along by the side of the wall, I came to a gateway opening to the south, and approached by a small arched bridge carried over the fosse. The latter was dry, and several foxes had made their holes close to the arch, and in the fosse, where the cubs were disporting themselves. I could easily have shot a fox, but I kept my fowling-piece as a means of defence.

But the strangest scene of all awaited me on entering within the precincts. The vast expanse was a mass of crumbled ruin, rising only a few feet above the level of the ground, with here and there a solitary building that had withstood the ravages of time. But what took me by surprise was to find this rubbish tenanted by innumerable monitors or great lizards before alluded to, that scuttled away into their holes as I approached them. What also puzzled me greatly was what they could find to live upon in such a place.

The walls were double—a fact alluded to by historians—the outer one being lower than the inner, which alone was embattled.

I found the walls to be disposed in the form of an irregular decagon having ten sides of unequal length, that part of the wall which fronted the river to the south being the most extensive, and having a length of 1,430 paces. The two extremities of this frontage, at



the south-east and south-west angles, were occupied by circular towers, sixty-four paces in circumference. There were four gateways. The one at the south-east angle was an ornamental Saracenic structure, thirty-two feet in front, having eight niches in the walls, and a doorway nine feet in width. At the northern gateway was what appeared to be an Imam or mausoleum, the base of which was a pentagonal tower, having a superimposed structure of which the columns or supports were all that remained. The arch alone remained of a third gateway.

The chief ruins within the precincts of the city were those of the palace of Harūn al Rāshid. Although very ruinous, it was a beautiful remnant of a polygonal building, of much architectural taste and richly decorated. In the interior, tapering columns rose half-way up the height of the building, and then sprang off with groined arches, with all the lightness and grace of our best Gothic structures upon a small scale. The whole of the interior was beautifully ornamented with arabesques and fretwork of exquisite tracery, but fast crumbling into dust, and taken altogether, it had been a pretty but by no means an imposing palace for so renowned a Khalif.

A short distance from the Saraï was a group of ruins of greater extent, which were distinguished by eleven arches still standing supported by columns, and attached to it was a minaret, faced with coloured tiles, except at the base, which was ornamented with columns of marble, with capitals of gypsum or alabaster. This minaret was fifty-eight feet high, and

had the usual interior staircase. These were the ruins apparently of a mosque and *madrassseh* or college. There were also ruins of a smaller mosque or other public building at the western angle of the enclosure. Without the walls, at the south-east corner, were the ruins of a Saracenic castle, and beyond this remains of a winter residence of the Arabs. There were also ruins of a *caravanserai* at the south-eastern gate, and still further off were still more extensive ruins, amongst which were those of a modern mosque with an extensive burial-ground, to which a vast number of hewn stones, capitals of columns, and other fragments, had been removed to decorate the graves of Al Fadhli Arabs. Not far from the mosque were also the remains of a square tower similar to the one at Haran. These ruins all belonged to Rafika, 'the retreat.'

In the afternoon of the same day, I again visited the ruins, in company with Colonel Chesney and a Mullah or priest, whom he had picked up at Rafika, and who described himself as Isma'l of the tribe of Rammal Dar. He pointed out the palace as that of Harūn al Rāshid, the northern gate as that of Taimūr the Tatar, the mausoleum as sacred to Abū, also called Wāsīl Kāranī, and the central tower he designated as that of Sheikh Awabā. He also pointed out inscriptions on the castle as recording that it had been restored by Sultan Sulaiman, son of Selim, with the date of the year 1090 of the Hejrah.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen, in noticing the pass of Thapsacus,

<sup>1</sup> By this time not a fox, or an ibis, or even a monster lizard was to be seen.

that the place had been previously reduced by Togrul Bey, the first of the Seljukian Sultans, as also by Taimūr the lame, our Tamerlane.

This great disturber of the peace of the world is said to have found the place of such great strength that he was obliged to have recourse to stratagem, and feigning to take his departure, after a prolonged and unsuccessful siege, he left behind him camels supposed to be laden only with superfluous baggage, such as a discomfited army no longer cared to trouble itself with, but which in reality concealed soldiery, and who being taken into the citadel, opened the gate that still bears his name.

The tradition, such as it is, has more verisimilitude in it than the question discussed at such length in the pages of Homer as to the admission of the wooden horse into the city of Troy.

The citadel, with its mosque and other Saracenic ruins, as it now stands, is unquestionably due to Harūn al Rāshīd, who, says Golius, 'built here a splendid citadel, as also a summer palace, where he was accustomed to dwell with great delight.' It is also said to have been called Rakka, the 'white,' or 'illustrious,' because there was another Rakka lower down the river, called 'the dark or obscure,' a large village abounding with gardens, and which was one farsakh distant.

The name was, however, according to others, given to it from its being occasionally exposed to inundations. This, being at the junction of the Bilecha with the Euphrates, and that in a low marshy district, seems to be a reasonable version founded on the facts of the case.

The Khalif El Mamun is said to have added the suburb of Rafika, 'the retreat,' not used in the ordinary sense of the word, a place of retirement and comfort, but as being on higher ground, a retreat or place of safety from the inundations. The inundations may account for the number of monitors that abound in the place.

Rakka was, in the time of Harūn al Rāshīd and El Mamun, with Kalah en Nesjm, the centre of the Arabian astronomical observations; and hence the first mentioned site became the point selected by the astronomer of Batnæ or Serug—Al Batani or Albategnus<sup>1</sup>—as being exactly in the parallel of  $36^{\circ}$ , from whence to commence his celebrated astronomical tables.

Other astronomers, we learn from Golius in his commentary on the astronomy of Al Firgani, add a trifle to this figure. Ibn Yunuz one minute, and Ibn Shatir three minutes. In the tables of Nasr-ud-din and of Ali Bey, Rakka is placed exactly in  $36^{\circ}$ .

D'Anville justly remarks that this difference shows that repeated observations were made, and that the discrepancies may arise from the places at which they were taken.

The true position of Rakka was then one of great interest to astronomers, and this was further increased by its being nearly in the same parallel as the adjacent pass of Thapsacus, and which was placed by Eratosthenes on his celebrated 'diaphragm of Rhodes.'

<sup>1</sup> Gayangos gives his name as Muhammad Ibn Jabir Ibn Sinan Abū Abdullah, and d'Herbelot also calls him Muhammad Ibn Giabar, from which it would appear that he belonged rather to Giabar or Jaber than to Batnæ. But he is stated to have been born in the latter city, whence his surname Al Batani, latinised into Albategnus.

The learned keeper of the Alexandrian library under Ptolemy Euergetes was the first to introduce a systematic arrangement, on principles of approximate correctness, into the geography of the ancients. The foundation of his system was the projection or protraction of an imaginary parallel between the 36th and 37th degree of latitude, from the Pillars of Hercules or Straits of Gibraltar, at the western extremity of the line, to the further limits of Asia upon the east. This parallel was hence carried on the assumed parallel of  $36^{\circ} 20'$ , by Sicily, Rhodes, Gulf of Issus, Pass of the Euphrates, Nineveh, and Ecbatana, to the Caspian Gates, and from it he proposed to mark off the longitudinal measurements of the then known world.

Ptolemy, it is to be observed, places Nicephorium (Rakka) in latitude  $35^{\circ} 20'$  and longitude  $75^{\circ} 5'$ .

Now Lieutenant Murphy, the astronomer of the Euphrates Expedition, placed this station, so important in an astronomical point of view, in north latitude  $35^{\circ} 55' 35''$ ; and east longitude (of Greenwich),  $39^{\circ} 3' 35''$ , being only  $5' 25''$  south of the position given to it by the Arabian astronomers, but slightly at variance with the position attributed to it by the Alexandrian geographer, as well as considerably south of the diaphragm of Rhodes, which would rather cut the Euphrates at the Zeugma or pass of Hierapolis, and as most of the other positions on the same projection are found to correspond more or less to the assumed latitude, we cannot but suppose that not Thapsacus, but the old pass of the Assyrians at Kalah Nesjm, was what was meant by Eratosthenes.

D'Anville has, by not understanding the point in question, been led to one of the strangest geographical errors perhaps ever perpetrated. In his map attached to his great work, '*L'Euphrate et le Tigre*,' he places all the portions of the river south of Hierapolis south of the parallel of Rakka, instead of south of the parallel of Hierapolis, and he has thus made the river flow in a northerly direction up to Rakka—a proceeding not at all corresponding to what is observed by the river Euphrates itself.

The Arabian geographers, Abû-l-fada and Idrisi, state that Rakka was called by the Greeks Balanicos, for which misprint, as Williams justly remarks in his work on the Campaigns of Alexander, read Kalinicos. D'Anville calls it an error of the copyists, and Abû-l-faraj has it correctly Kalinicos.

These combined testimonies leave no doubt as to the proximity, if not the identity, of the Rakka of the Khalifat with the Callinicus or Callinicum of the Romans, and which is described as equally distinguished by its strength as a fortress, the advantages of its situation, and its suitability for purposes of commerce. Founded by Alexander the Great, according to Pliny (vi. 26), because of the advantages of its situation, and called by him Nicephorium, it was in reality a station of great antiquity.

Situated as it was on the Mesopotamian side of the most central pass of the Euphrates, and at or near the point of junction of the Bilecha with that river, it opened, in a country where water is as necessary to a merchant or a caravan as it is to an army, an easy line

of access into the heart of Mesopotamia, and hence to all the territories of farther Asia.

The merchants of Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Phœnicia proceeded from the earliest times by Tadmor or Palmyra, and the marble city of Resapha, to Thapsacus, Sura, or Turmeda; and thence by the valley of the Bilecha to Harran, Sarug, and Ur or Edessa.

The valley of the 'Royal river' of Strabo was protected by towns or fortresses, among which were Alama, with a royal mansion, and Ichnæ, where Crassus's son fell. The position of Anthemusia is less certain, probably opposite to Kalah en Nesjm.

Embellished, according to Procopius (lib. ii. 'De Ædif.' cap. 7), at the same time as Carrhæ, it was here that Galerius took refuge after his unsuccessful combat, fought like that of Crassus upon the banks of the Bilecha; and Julian arrived at the same place, and in one day's march, from Dauana (now Kalah Jiabar), at a time when his historians, Ammianus Marcellinus (xx. iii.), and Zozimus (iii. xiii.), describe it as being 'a strong fortress, admirably adapted for commercial purposes.'

Some difference of opinion, we have seen, exists as to the origin of the Roman name for this place—Callinicus or Kallinicus. Valesius, in a note attached to Ammianus, says that Libanus, in a letter to Aristænetus, relates that Callinicum was so called because Callinicus the sophist was slain there.

This Callinicus lived, according to Suidas, in the reign of Gallienus. But others have remarked upon the improbability of a city being named after a private

individual—‘quod mireris a privato homine urbem nomen accepisse’—and the statement of Libanus is fully disproved by the fact mentioned in the chronicles of Alexander, as quoted by the writer of the above—Cellarius—that Seleucus Callinicus built Callinicipolis in Mesopotamia.

It should, however, be written repaired or embellished—not built—for it is quite certain that, as described by Pliny and by Isidorus of Charax, Alexander founded at this point, after his successful passage of the Euphrates, a city which he called Nicephorium, or ‘the city of victory.’ It preserves this name in Strabo, Tacitus, and Dio Cassius; but Cellarius, who treats of Nicephorium or Nikephorium as ‘nobilius et a pluribus laudatum,’ looks upon the two places as different. The balance of testimony is in favour of the identity of the two; but the vast extent of wooded slopes and plain which stretches the whole length of the reach of Thapsacus, and upon which ruins were perceived but not explored, requires a careful examination before the question can be satisfactorily determined.

It does not seem likely that a successor of Alexander the Great should have altered the name given to a city by his predecessor, and it appears more probable that it was Thapsacus or Sura that Seleucus Callinicus restored. Stephanus tells us that the city of Seleucus Callinicus was called Turmeda by the Syrians, and this by a frequent transmutation of the T into S, or by Stephanus having written T for S, may have been the Sura of the Romans. But such an identification is opposed by an overwhelming evidence



in favour of the identity of Nicephorium and Callinicus. It further appears from the testimony of Stephanus of Byzantium, that the same site was known in the time of the Low Empire by the name of Constantina, or according to Suidas as Constantia ; and it also appears, from the notices collected by Wesseling, that it was in the beginning of the tenth century, and in the time of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, named after his father—Leo the Philosopher—Leontopolis.

Proof enough, at all events with the fact that in the Ecclesiastical Notices of the Low Empire, it is mentioned with Carrhæ or Haran, Batnæ or Serug, and BIRTHA, as one of four episcopacies under the metropolitan or patriarch of Edessa ; that from the time of Solomon, and that of Alexander the Great, under each successive dominating power, Hebrew, Macedonian, Roman, Byzantine, Persian, Arab, Turk, and Tatar, it never ceased to be regarded as a site of importance, until, with the decadence of a nerveless and prostrate power, it has been allowed to fall into ruin and desolation—the home of foxes, monitors, and ibises.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE FOREST OF AMRAN.

THE remarkable easterly bend which the river Euphrates makes from Sura to Rakka with the ford of Thapsacus in its upper part, or as Pliny has it from the Palmyrean solitudes, to wash the more fertile territories of Mygdonia, causes a considerable interval of barren unproductive country to be left to the south and south-westward, only broken by the ancient causeway which led from Palmyra by Resapha to Thapsacus.

This vast tract of country, known to Pliny, as we have seen, as the Palmyrean solitudes, was called in the middle ages *Campus Barbaricus*, as we learn from Procopius, who says that Sergiopolis and Zenobia were situated on that same barbarian field or plain. The first is the name which Resapha obtained in the times of an early Christianity from a Jacobite monastery founded there and dedicated to St. Sergius; the second is not on the plain at all, but at the southern side of a range of basaltic rocks and hills called Bushir, and between which the Euphrates has to force its way by a narrow pass.

The same great plain, known to the Arabs as that of Siffin, obtained unusual importance in their eyes from

its having been the scene of those disastrous civil, or rather religious conflicts, which terminated by dividing Muhammadanism into the two hostile sects of Sunnis and Shi'ahs, now almost equivalent to Western and Eastern Islamism.

Long debarred from the succession, Ali, son-in-law of Muhammad, had by the death of Othman and the overthrow of Ayesha, only one rival left between himself and the viceroyalty of the Prophet on earth.

This was Muawiyah, the vicegerent of the Prophet in Syria ; and the two armies, said in Oriental phraseology to have amounted to 150,000 Moslems, waged a desultory warfare of one hundred days' duration in this spacious wilderness, for both competitors were unwilling to peril their cause by a definite engagement.

During this long interval, ninety actions or skirmishes are recorded as having taken place, and in all of these Ali is said to have rendered himself conspicuous alike by his valour and humanity. He even proposed to save the blood of the faithful by single combat ; but this was declined by Muawiyah, for Ali was renowned for extraordinary feats of personal strength and skill, and death itself is related as having ' dwelt on the point of his spear, and perdition in the hilt of his sword.'

He is said to have cleft at one stroke, from the crest to the saddle-bow, the hideous and gigantic Kirraib, who could obliterate with his thumb the impression on a silver coin, and he did the same with another opponent, and that with such rapidity and precision, that the rider remained fixed on the saddle, the spectators concluding that he had missed his blow until the

motion of the horse threw the body in halves upon the ground.

A legend of prowess of a similar character came to England with the crusaders, and is related by Robert of Gloucester as having occurred at the siege of Antioch:—

The Duke Godfrey, all so good, on the shouldren smote one,  
And forclave him all that body to the saddle anon ;  
The one half fell adown anon, the other beleved still  
In the saddle, theigh it wonder were, as it was God's will :  
This horse bear forth this half man among his fellows each one,  
And they, for the wonder case, in dread fell anon.

As often as Ali smote an enemy, the shout of Ali Akbar, 'God is great,' arose, and Gibbon and Crichton have preserved the tradition that in one nocturnal encounter on this dread plain, he was heard to repeat four hundred times, says the one, five hundred and twenty-three says the other, that holy call !

At length so desultory and unsatisfactory a system of warfare was brought to a close by the foremost Syrians advancing to the conflict with copies of the Kuran affixed to their spears. The fanatical Arabs demanded that the sword should return to the scabbard in reverence to the book, and Ali had to retire discomfited, to perish at Kufa, while Muawiyah became the first of the Ommiade dynasty of Khalifs.

On the morning of May 11 the steamers dropped down the river a distance of eight miles south of Rakka, and brought to at the side of the plain of Siffīn, not far from a small Arab encampment belonging to the Afadīl tribe.

The banks were, however, high at this point, and a

line of low cliffs stretched across the plain of level greensward, out of which, at a distance of a mile or more, a colossal white mass stood apart like some isolated ruin. My curiosity being much excited by this peculiar white object, Colonel Chesney offered to accompany me in a closer examination. It proved to be a long walk, and we were somewhat disappointed at finding nothing more than a great mass of gypsum which had become detached from the cliffs, and its natural transparency converted by the action of the air into a milk-white opacity.

As, after examining this curious mass of rock, we were about to return, we perceived some Arabs approaching from the south, and they soon came up to us ; their long sinewy arms and limbs quite bare, jerids in their hands, and they accosted us with insulting jeers.

As we proceeded onwards they pressed upon us, holding the exceedingly sharp points of their jerids close to our bodies, just as a boy would prick a donkey on from behind ; and as they had it in their power to wound us without our being able to use our fowling-pieces, we separated for a distance of twenty paces or more, each keeping a look out for the other's back.

By this arrangement we were enabled to make some progress, and conversation began to establish itself.

‘ Where are you going to ? ’ said a stalwart Arab at my left hand, his jerid close to my side.

‘ Down the river. ’

‘ But you will get to the country of the Adwans. ’

‘ Well ! what of that ? ’

‘They will cut your throats,’ said the Arab, doing the action expressive of that little performance.

‘No, they won’t; we have guns,’ I answered, also suiting the action to words by patting the locks.

Just at that moment there arose out of the greensward a huge cobra right in front of me. Over six feet in length he stood, with his tail twisted as a support, as high as myself, the side appendages of his horrid triangular head expanded as if ready to strike.

Before a word could be spoken, and before I had even time to bring my fowling-piece to bear upon him, the Arab had run the reptile through the head with his jerid. I was so pleased and so struck with the promptitude of the act, which possibly saved my life, that I placed my hand on the man’s shoulder to express my gratitude. The dusky rover of the desert was not insensible to the act; he dropped his weapon with a smile of self-satisfaction, and from that time to the end of the walk we were good friends, all further distrust having from that moment been thrown aside.

This wonderful dexterity with the jerid is obtained by early and constant practice. Frequently, passing through a village, I have seen quite little boys practising with the weapon which in after life is rarely out of their hands.

Dr. Ross, of the Baghdad Residency, told me that when travelling with Nijirib, the brother of the Sheikh of the Shammar Arabs, a snake having disputed the way, the Arab drove his jerid right through its head.

Some Arabs present said ‘Bravo!’ But Ross thought it was an accident and said as much; Nijirib simply

replied 'Where will you have me pierce it this time?' 'In the tail,' said Ross. In an instant the reptile was wriggling in the air on the point of the jerid, the weapon having passed through within an inch of the point of the tail.

On quitting the encampment of the Afadīl Arabs we entered upon districts of tamarisk and jungle which constituted the outskirts of the so-called forest of Amrān. We were greeted on sweeping past into the cover by a shot from the Arabs, but fired at too great a distance to do any injury, and we were making too rapid way to have time to return the compliment.

As we advanced into the forest, mulberry trees and the cottony poplar became frequent; but the growth was stunted, rarely above twenty-five feet in height and some eighteen inches in girth. The tamarisk, on the contrary, grew now to some fifteen or twenty feet, preserving, however, its shrubby character. It was a harder and better wood, but we found it was difficult to lay in a supply for fuel when we brought to in the afternoon for that purpose.

These natural forests of mulberry trees were formerly turned to advantage by the natives. Idrisi notices the district under the name Zurbūk, and says that it contains woods of mulberry trees so dense as to be impermeable except by pathways which conduct to habitations within the woods and which are so surrounded by trees as to be like fortified villages.

Many families lived together in such situations, and busied themselves in rearing silkworms and obtaining silk, for which they had to pay from three to four

hundred purses annually to the Arabs called Mu'Ali, who wintered at Salahiyah and came hither in summer. At present the Arab tribes in the same neighbourhood are the Shawi who dwell near Rakka, the Adwan, Abû Ri'ash, and Afadil, who dispute among themselves small portions of territory available for pasture, and have left off the manufacture of silk from insecurity and oppression.

The early portion of the navigation of the ensuing day still lay in the forest, till it was succeeded by marsh and jungle, and the river assumed a more winding and tortuous course, with occasional sandy points.

Rock formations did, however, approach the river at a few places. The first case of this kind occurred a little north of the village of Muhaïla, probably the Muhammadiyah of Idrisi, where cliffs of marls and gypsum were met with about a hundred feet in height, and a little beyond the village they came down in harder rocks to the water's edge, so as to give birth to a backwater and a whirlpool, which is at times dangerous to small boats.

This particular rock and whirlpool were indeed described by Rauwolf, who descended the river in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as a fearful precipice and whirlpool. We have, however, the authority of a poet of antiquity, that the whirlpools of the Euphrates have been humbled since the days of Augustus—

*Medumque flumen, gentibus additum  
Victis, minores volvere vortices.*

And probably the same thing has been going on since the time of the virgin queen.



The weather was now becoming somewhat overcast and the heat oppressive, the thermometer in the shade being at midday at 83°, and towards evening a sultry breeze set in from the south-east. We brought to for the night near a fortified village called Al Kebîr Munaka, and where we hoped to obtain some fresh provisions.

The 13th was a fine clear day, and the navigation was continued through a more diversified country. On the right bank the marls and gypsum formed low hills, and a slightly undulating territory at varying distances of from two to three miles from the river, the intervening space being occupied by hawis or level tracts of fertile and pastoral land, upon which a cow or buffalo might be seen, occasionally but rarely. It is in such a country that one feels the force of the personification of nature indulged in by the Augustan poet, who makes the father-stream Inachus proffer food to his daughter Io—

Her father gave her grass ; the grass she took,  
And licked his palms.

In hot dry countries the dependence here expressed is seen in every brook, where narrow borders are alone refreshed by a rich greensward ; but when illustrated by a great river flowing through a boundless wilderness, it embraces not only the lonely cow but the families of men who are forced by the same necessities to congregate, alas ! only in occasional villages, far from one another, on the banks of the same ever-enduring and refreshing waters.

The left bank presented a more arid aspect, only

diversified by a few hardy shrubs, sturdy *compositæ*, and many succulent plants, which looked as if they had grown on a furnace hearth. But even here the immediate banks of the river presented the same thin, dark-green line of tamarisk—the framework of the sparkling stream in a dusky brown expanse of desert.

The advent of the steamers, breaking for the first time the silent monotony of the waste of waters, often frightened the wild boars from this narrow line of cover, and sometimes so terrified the poor creatures, that not knowing what to do, they cantered along with the steamers. On one occasion an old sow, with a litter of young porkers, kept pace with us so long that even the men on the deck began to pity it. At last, the little ones beginning to drop one by one, the stupid old lady was obliged to give in, and to find that it had been pursuing a most useless and uncalled-for flight.

The night of the 13th was passed near another Arab village, called that of Abû Sayyid, or ‘the father of holy men.’ The next day the Bushir hills came in sight. They were neither lofty nor striking in form, nor covered with wood, yet it is difficult to imagine what relief they afforded to the eye wearied with the monotony of scenery and similarity of objects presented during the three days’ past navigation.

Between Rakka and these hills, a distance of ninety miles by the river, I had counted twelve marshy districts, chiefly about Abû Sayyid; eight spots in which the dwarf plants of the wilderness came down to the river banks, four regions of low jungle, two sandy points, four groves of mulberry and poplar,

five tracts of greensward or pasture land with villages, and twelve cultivated spots; all the rest was covered with the eternal tamarisk.

The Bushir hills are of volcanic origin, and come down from Palmyra to where they are cut through by the river, and Zenobia had her summer residence at their southern foot. They, however, leave a wide margin on the river banks for road or railway. The name, like that of Bushire on the Persian Gulf, is probably a corruption of Abû Shehr, or 'the father of cities;' but whether this has reference to Palmyra or to Zélébe, as Queen Zenobia's town is called, I do not know—probably the latter.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE SUMMER RETREAT OF QUEEN ZENOBIA.

WE entered the land-locked pass of Euphrates, where its waters are hemmed in by the volcanic ridge of the Bushir hills, with feelings of apprehension lest some hidden rock or dangerous crag should obstruct the passage of the steamers. We, however, by careful lookout, passed through in safety, when unanticipated wonders awaited us.

Just as the river was about to quit the narrow range of hills, these were found to recede, previously to the river taking an easterly bend, and leave more or less level ground on both sides. On the right bank the alabaster walls of an ancient and now uninhabited citadel were seen rising to the summit of a detached eminence, which was crowned by the ruins of a castle or acropolis, while upon the left a low sheltered and shady poplar grove—one of the prettiest secluded places as yet met with—led the way to the foot of another loftier but nearly isolated hill, with precipitous sides, and upon whose high summit were the ruins of a castle of different age and aspect.

The castle stood in the same relation to the alabaster ruins that Rakka did to Thapsacus (the city, not the

pass); the one was at the head of the bend of the river to the east, or rather just above it, the other was above, where it turned from the east to flow to the southward. But while the first-mentioned reach was miles in extent, and the river very wide, the easterly reach here was only a few miles in length, and the river did not expand more than usual.

The steamers brought to at this remarkable spot, and the next day being Sunday, we had a more prolonged opportunity than usually offered itself of examining these interesting ruins, which although bearing the name of the distinguished queen of Palmyra, were before almost, if not entirely, unknown in Europe.

The citadel itself was fortified with walls and towers, now in a state of dilapidation, but which, as well as the private habitations and public buildings, all in the same partly ruinous condition, had been constructed of fine and often transparent gypsum or alabaster.

The walls were distributed in the form of a nearly acute triangle, the base of which rested upon the river, while the sides ascended the steep acclivity of a conical hill, the apex of which bore a small acropolis.

As the greater part of this citadel or town is exposed, the necessity of an increased number of flanking towers became apparent, and accordingly twelve of these works defended the southern side, and eight the northern or shorter side; whilst on the river, which is protected by walls, there were fewer, and these farther apart.

Within the town or citadel were the remains of a temple, and of a palace which contained many orna-

mental apartments. There were also other buildings supported by arches.

The whole of the buildings, as also the walls and towers, although dilapidated, were in places in an excellent state of preservation; large solid blocks of gypsum had been everywhere used in their construction, and these presented an appearance of such unsullied purity, and imparted to the place such a dazzling whiteness, as, but for fractures here and broken pieces there, one might fancy it to be a city abandoned but few years ago.

Many of the apartments of the dwelling-houses and the more lofty halls of the palatial edifice were in such perfect keeping as to be ready at once to receive their inhabitants, and it was difficult to reconcile oneself to the idea of the place being tenantless.

Yet there were no people dwelling within or around the city. No Arabs made their appearance on either bank of the river during our stay here; and this, with the exceeding beauty of the spot, and the death-like stillness which pervaded the white and ghost-like ruins, lent enchantment to the scene.

Like the great city on which it was dependent—Palmyra—the necropolis was apart from the town, and occupied a prominent position in the valley and along the declivity of the hill on its south-easterly aspect. The tombs also, like those of Palmyra, were mostly square towers; but while those of the mother city are from two to four stories in height, and in the case of Jamblicus five stories high, those of Zenobia were uniformly three; not like that of Manaius, lessening by

each course of stone, but the lower and middle stories of the same size, and presenting the usual sepulchral apartments, with shelves in recesses to receive the mummies or dead bodies, whilst the upper story seems to have served as a place of defence, or to have been purely ornamental, being surmounted by a flat or pyramidal roof and enclosed within an embattled wall.

On the door of one of the entrances I distinguished with great difficulty the fragment of an inscription, *ΙωΑΜ · Κο · ΑφωΜΑ*; and since the time I am now writing about, and at a subsequent visit made to the same place, Captain Lynch opened one of the tombs which had not been rifled by the Arabs, and found in it the mummy of a female whose face was covered with a thin mask of gold, showing to what a luxurious extent the system of sepulture was carried by the rich Palmyrenes.

A little below the site of the citadel, and on the opposite or left bank of the river, were the remains of an embankment, partly arched with bricks fifteen or sixteen inches square, but chiefly of solid stone, to which apparently a bridge of boats had once been attached.

Beyond this was the ruined castle before alluded to, which presented a rather incongruous heap of towers and walls, with vaulted apartments within built of limestone, and in part of Sassanian style of architecture, but strengthened or repaired by the Saracens; thus leading to the belief that it was occupied by the Persians in opposition to the Palmyrenes; and that it stood in the same relationship to the citadel of Zenobia that Ctesiphon did to Seleucia.

But we have the authority of Al Wakedi, an Arabian historian, that the two castles known as Zilba and Riba were held at the time of the Muhammadan conquest by Christians.

The tradition of a tunnel existing in the middle ages under the Euphrates is attached to Nesjm Kalah and also to this place, but to this with positive evidence, for Al Wakedi relates a little known and so eventful a story in connection with the stratagem by which the two castles fell to the Mussulmans, and in which the tunnel by which they were brought into connection plays so important a part, that I shall devote a future chapter to the narrative, the more especially as Al Wakedi's work has not yet been made known to the general public.

It is not surprising that the summer retreat of Queen Zenobia, which derives no less celebrity from its name and associations than it does from its architectural beauty, is not noticed by the older geographers, but it is so by Procopius, when treating '*de ædificiis secundo et Persicorum primo*;' as it is also, after that solitary notice, by some modern geographers, as D'Anville and Rennell; but as with many other sites which the first navigation of the river in our own times has brought to light, no accounts of this once favoured spot have before been given to the public.

The position of the ruined city of Zenobia, the natural advantages of its site, the charms of its situation, and the name which it bears, combine with the character of permanence which its ruinous edifices and splendid mausolea testify to, to the belief that it was a retreat peculiarly favoured by a princess, equally distinguished



for intellect and beauty as for strength of character—an Asiatic princess possessed at once of Grecian refinement and Roman hardihood.

Justice has never yet been done to the true position which the kingdom of Palmyra held between Persian power and Roman ambition; nor has the ingratitude and unsparing persecution of the latter in their hostility to a dynasty which ever stood between them and Persian supremacy, and in sweeping away such nascent splendour and civilisation from the face of the earth, been placed in its true light.

The historians of the day were Romans; and with the exception of the illustrious Longinus, the 'City of Palms' had no lettered representative. Almost everything that is represented in connection with Zenobia and Oedenathus has been taken from their lives in the 'Augustan History' by Trebellius Pollio.

Founded in the wilderness by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18), the name of Tadmor by its signification in the Syriac denoted the multitude of palm-trees which once afforded shade and verdure to what has ever been an oasis in the desert. The name was perpetuated in the Palmyra of the Romans. The city really owes its existence to springs issuing from basaltic rocks that here rise out of a sandy wilderness.

Situated at a convenient distance between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean, and protected by the vast expanse of wilderness around, the place grew in opulence and power, and became the centre of the Indian and Persian commerce, in its exchanges with that of Syria and Palestine.

It constituted a kind of republic of its own till the victories of Trajan brought the territory within the limits of the Roman Empire. During the long interval, however, between Trajan and Valerian, Palmyra seldom engaged the attention of the Cæsars, although during the same century and a half it continued to increase in wealth, population, and power.

The disasters of Valerian established Palmyra as the bulwark of Roman power in the East. The beautiful and intellectual Zenobia and her martial husband Œdenathus had raised the prosperity of the country to its highest pitch. At the same time the imperial dignity was more than ever prostrated, and the degraded Gallienus took no steps to avenge his father's misfortunes, or wipe out the disgrace attached by his defeat and imprisonment to the Roman arms.

It was under these trying circumstances that twice, led by their skilful and enthusiastic chiefs, the Palmyrenes drove the Persians before them from the banks of the Euphrates, and ultimately reached the walls of Ctesiphon; and in all probability, had not the imprisoned Cæsar been removed to the fatal castle called that of Lethe by the Romans, and situated on

Choaspes' amber stream,  
The drink of none but kings,

Zenobia would have restored to Rome its ancient emperor.

The senate and people were not, however, insensible to this effort of heroism made in the cause of their captured king, and the probably worse than indifferent

son of Valerian was forced by public opinion to acknowledge the services of the Palmyrenes, and to grant the title of Augustus to Œdenathus, which title was accompanied by all the prerogatives of the imperial dignity, and the command of the troops of the Empire of the East.

It is probable that it was during these bright days of Palmyra's glory that the queen built the city which still bears her name upon the banks of the Euphrates, and that she resorted to this pleasant site at certain seasons of the year, in order to enjoy those refreshing breezes which circulate at times along the valley of the great river.

Claiming her descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, she brought hither the same Grecian taste in architecture which had embellished the City of Palms, with the same dark sepulchral superstitions from the banks of the Nile, from which neither the tuition of Longinus nor a then young Christianity had been able to rescue the nation.

Œdenathus having fallen under the hand of an assassin, the jealousy and ingratitude of Gallienus declared itself by his depriving Zenobia of her rights as a queen. But her noble and haughty spirit rebelled at the injustice done to her, and a Roman general sent to enforce the decree of a servile senate was obliged to retreat with the loss of his army and his reputation.

It is not to be wondered at that these successes, superadded to the contempt and hatred engendered by flagrant ingratitude, added to a bold and ambitious temperament hereditary from the Macedonians, should

have caused the outraged queen to discard all dependence upon or connection with the Eternal City—to despise its existing Cæsars, and to attack them in their Eastern Empire.

Claudius, who succeeded to Gallienus, was content to leave her undisturbed while he was engaged in the troubles of a Gothic war; and while the power of the Palmyrenes extended on the one hand to Bithynia, the remotest province of Lesser Asia, we have the testimony of Zozimus to the effect that this heroine of the desert also added to her vast possessions the fertile and populous kingdom of Egypt as an inheritance from her ancestors.

The fortunes of Rome were, however, destined to gain the ascendancy. A warlike prince, Aurelian, had succeeded to the purple, and he undertook the laborious task of reuniting the dismembered parts of the Empire. The submission of Ancyra and the betrayal of Tyana ensured the recovery of Lesser Asia. Passing through the Gates of Cilicia and Syria, the victorious Romans encountered the Palmyrenes upon the plain of Imma or Antioch, and we have related the geographical details of this decisive engagement in a previous chapter.

After a further unsuccessful stand made at Emesa, Aurelian invested Palmyra itself, but his terms of capitulation were indignantly rejected. The Emperor himself was astounded by the difficulties of the siege, but the perseverance of the Pannonian soldier triumphed over every obstacle. Zenobia was obliged to fly, and mounted upon the fleetest of her dromedaries, she had

nearly reached her beloved retreat on the Euphrates, when she was overtaken by Aurelian's light horse, seized and brought back a captive at the feet of the Emperor.

‘Modern Europe,’ says Gibbon, ‘has produced several illustrious women who have sustained with glory the weight of empire, nor is our own age destitute of such distinguished characters. But if we except the doubtful achievements of Semiramis, Zenobia is perhaps the only female whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex by the climate and manners of Asia.’

This statement is wanting in the usual learned comprehensiveness of its author. Not to mention the renowned Ba'lkis, queen of Sheba, undoubtedly an Arabian princess, although claimed by the Abyssinians, a Sabæan princess headed the predatory band that despoiled Job of his patrimony.

The province of Yimana is said to have been so called from a queen of that name. Ecclesiastical historians repeatedly mention Muawiyah as among the female rulers of the Arabs. But the most analogous case to that of Zenobia is presented to us in the history of Queen Zabba, who ruled at Al Hadhr—the Atræ of the Romans—and a fortified city, almost as centrally situated in the heart of the Mesopotamian wilderness as Palmyra was in the Syrian, and which, unlike the City of Palms, successfully resisted the arms of Trajan and Severus.

Zabba had, however, dishonoured her rule by causing Judaimah, the second of the Christian kings of

Hira, who had been entrapped by her, to be bled to death.

This crime was avenged by his successor, Amru I., who is reported to have captured the city by the old and oft-repeated stratagem of a mercantile cargo of soldiers, and the Mesopotamian princess fell by swallowing a deadly poison which she kept enclosed in a ring.

If the existing ruins at Al Hadhr, which have been so recently brought to light, do not exhibit a similar extent in splendour to those of Palmyra, still enough remains in the magnitude of its palatial halls, its marble towers and tombs, and its sculptured busts and friezes (many of the former of which represent female heads) to attest that in all probability it was under female rule that the arts attained their highest development in the Mesopotamian as well as in the Syrian desert.

## CHAPTER XI.

## AN ARABIAN STORY.

THE account of the reduction of the twin castles—Zilba and Riba—the subjects of the previous chapter, by the Muhammadans, is contained in a work by Al Wakedi entitled ‘The History of the Conquest of Mesopotamia by the Arabs,’ which has been printed in Arabic by Ewald in Germany.

This narrative, as far as I know, has not yet been given to the public, yet it contains many facts of interest in the history of early Christianity, as also being in itself of some historical importance. It is indeed a chapter that is wanting in Ockley’s ‘History of the Saracens.’

It might have been rendered into better English, but that would have spoilt the quaintness and naïveté of the original. It is also a little prolix, as is generally the case with Oriental writers when they get upon the theme of their religion, and it attests to their utter ignorance of the Christian faith; but these little defects will be overlooked in the intrinsic value of the record, and the admirable picture which it affords of the manners of the time.

After relating how Abû Obeidah appointed Ayad

ibn Ghanīm el Ashari to the command of the Mesopotamian army, and how that general reduced the towns of Rahabah el Hamra and Rakka on the Euphrates, he proceeds to relate that before he ventured to advance beyond that point—the most vulnerable one of Mesopotamia—by the Bilecha, to attack Sahriyad ibn Farinum, the Christian king of Ras al Aīn, he resolved upon reducing the two castles on the Euphrates known as Zilba or Zilya and Riba.

The officers appointed for this purpose were Al Ashat al Mazeni and Abd Allah Yukina. The latter had been the Christian governor of Aleppo, but on joining the Muhammadans he had had the name of Abd Allah, ‘the servant of God,’ bestowed upon him.

‘I have heard,’ says El Wakedi, ‘from Ishak al Amawi regarding Yezid ibn Abū Habib, that before Ayad went to Ras al Aīn, Al Ashab al Mazeni and Abd Allah Yukina were deputed to effect the reduction of the two castles known as Riba and Zilba or Zilya.

‘Abd Allah (Yukina) said to Ayad—“God preserve you, O Amīr, you must know that these two forts are impregnable. One is on the west side of the river and the other on the east. They were formerly under my rule, and the present governor is my cousin, by name Akshifat ibn Mariyeh. I gave my daughter in marriage to his son, but he died during her pregnancy, and she took for her portion the fort on the east side of the Euphrates. I think it would be advisable if you command me that I should go and endeavour to obtain possession of the western fort, then the other will also fall into our power.”



‘ And Ayad replied—“ O Abd Allah, Wullaby ! you have given the Islam good advice. May God reward you ! Go with the blessing of Allah and his assistance, and if the place holds out more than three days, we will send you Al Ashar ibn Kais and Abd Allah ibn Inān and their followers ; and after the capture of the forts, if it please God, we will proceed to Karkisha.”

‘ Yukina replied, “ We put our trust in Allah.”

‘ And he took a hundred of his followers, the best and bravest, each with a led horse ; but they took neither camels nor arms, and they proceeded by night, leaving Ayād at Balil (Balis ?), and they journeyed the rest of the night, and two hours before sunrise they reached Khanuka, where they found a thousand Armenians, with arms and accoutrements, in the hands of the light troops.

‘ And when they (the Armenians) reached them and heard the champing of the bits, they stopped and listened, and behold they were speaking in the language of Rum. So they went up to them and inquired of them who they were, and they said—“ This is the great patriarch—the master of Aleppo, surnamed Yukina—and he has run away from the Arabs and has come to this castle,” meaning the castle of Riba.

‘ And when they heard this they were delighted, considering it to be good news, and they went up to Yukina and saluted him, and they sent one of their chiefs, a man of the party of Akshifat, the governor of the two forts, to inform him of the story of Yukina and of his running away from the Arabs, and that he asked permission to enter the castle.

‘ But when the man arrived and spoke to Akshifat

on the subject, and when the latter heard this he became pensive, and said to his wuzîr—"By the Musseeh (Messiah) and the Anjil (Evangel), Yukina is come only to try and deceive us and to take possession of these two castles, as he has already done in the case of Tripoli and Sur (Tyre), and we cannot trust him. What is your opinion, O my wuzîr?"

‘Ibn Ishak relates that this wuzîr was of Fawah, a good Christian, wise and eloquent. He was one of those who was versed in ancient history and the prophecies of Daniel, and he was of Abamarin.

‘And when Muhammad was sent, he was dwelling in Mar-i-Hana (monastery of St. John), which is between Balis and Aleppo. And he dwelt there for some time, until his name became famous as a holy man. The Rum relate of him that he had prostrated himself under the hoofs of the ass of Christ. And it was the custom of the Rum to make vows and give alms to him; and his fame was spread abroad, and his reputation increased, and his convent was called Deir Hafar, or the "Convent of the Hoof."

‘And it so happened that once he left his convent to visit a farm he had there. And lo! a Bedawi passed mounted on a she-camel, and the heat was at its greatest, and he alighted near the wall of the Deir, and he made his camel kneel down and gave her her food, and fell asleep while the holy man was looking on.

‘And lo! when he was fast asleep a serpent came from the side of the farm with a branch of nangis (myrtle) in its mouth, and continued to fan him until he awoke from his sleep.

‘And when the holy man saw this he descended from the Deir and saluted him, and said :—“Of what nation are you?”

‘And he replied, “Of the Arabs.”

‘And he said, “I knew you were of the Arabs, but my question is of what religion are you?”

‘He replied, “I am of the religion of Islam.”

‘The holy man said, “Perhaps you are of the religion of him who has appeared in the land of Hijaz?”

‘And the Bedawi said, “Yes, I am one of his followers.”

‘Ishak related that this Bedawi’s name was Samet ibn Warkeh il Hazili Khaled, and that he was the cousin of Riawahah ibn Makeb il Ansari, the follower of the Prophet. And he was one of those who had fought in the presence of the Prophet in the cause of his family. But having fallen into disgrace at the storming of Tabuk, Abû Obaidah had sent him to the governor of Rakka to invite him to become a Mussulman.

‘And the holy man (or hermit, for the word may be read in either sense, only hermits do not dwell in convents) said—“I have heard that you say that God has not created any one greater, or more bountiful, or more merciful than Muhammad your Prophet. If you have forsaken Adam the father of mankind, and Noah and Abraham and Isaac, and the tribe of Israel, and Moses and Jesus, and David and Solomon, I wish you to explain to me the truth of the matter.”

‘Samet replied—“Listen to what I say to you, O Sharkub, and you will not be fatigued in hearing me relate these treasures of grace, and it will reach you in

abundance like a two-edged sword. Do you not know that the angel inhabitants of heaven, being assembled in the hall of the house of God, a contention fell out between them regarding the management of affairs; and they said that the cherubim were more noble than the Ruhanim (spirits), and that those who glorify God are above those who are near to God. And Eblis said to them, 'God have mercy upon you with the shield of his worship, and establish the foundations of his tenderness;' and he continued, 'I am created of fire—most excelling in the service of the gracious God. What great difference is there between you and me in the manifestations of zeal which have lasted with me a hundred thousand years? My services have been in heaven and its environs, both above and below, and on all sides, and on the mountains of the earth and in all its parts.'"

'And Gabriel contended with him in reply as to his pretensions to endurance and earnestness and high nobility, and said—"You no more belong to the nobility (the elect) than the lowest of the low. There is a friend among the creatures of heaven whom He is desirous of seeing, and God has promised happiness through him, and has appointed the object of our worship and prayers, and has assigned to him the most exalted place."

'And Eblis replied, "O Lord of the angels, is there any way by which I may be brought into his presence, or is there anyone to point out the way to me to reach him?"

'Eblis was much astonished at the words of Gabriel, and he added, "Considering all my great endeavours

in the service of God, I thought there was nobody like myself, and that I should be rewarded with the highest rank and honour."

'Upon this Gabriel pointed out to him a path which he should take, and having followed it, he was surprised by the appearance in the heavens of the dawning greatness of Muhammad, and he heard a voice crying—"By my glory and omnipotence, if it were not for Muhammad, I would not have created the angels, nor the firmament, nor the earth, nor mankind."

'And when Sharkub heard this story from Samet, he made no answer to him, for he knew that this was the truth, and he kept it secret.'

'And Sharkub remained in the Deir until Damascus and Aleppo were taken. He then proceeded to Arlabiyeh, and Akshifat, the lord of the place, made him his wuzir.

'And when he asked his opinion regarding Yukina he said—"O king! Yukina is the prince of philosophy, and has read books, and has been in company with those Arabs, and has entered into their secrets, and paid attention to their religion, and perhaps he has learnt that the religion of Christ is more honourable than that of this people, and he has run away to you with this belief; for if the man has come without loads, and without camels, and without arms, be sure that he has run away. It is incumbent on you that you should go and meet him and pay him great honour, and raise him in rank; and He who has prospered you will point out to you what you ought to do, and the advantage of having such a man as Yukina at your command."

‘And when Akshifat heard this from the wuzîr he went out with his soldiers to meet Yukina. And the daughter of Yukina, who had married the son of the king, was in the castle, and she heard that her father was with the army and that he was coming to her, so she descended by a passage underground which belonged to her,<sup>1</sup> and she found that King Akshifat had gone to meet her father with his soldiers, and that Sharkub was wearing the insignia of office. And when he saw her he rose up to meet her, and to make his obeisance, and she sat near him and spoke with him. And he said to her—“O Princess, be on your guard and take heed, for I fear for your father (Yukina) from the treachery of this accursed man (the king) in consequence of his suspicions of him, while he was at Aleppo, and of his having accepted the castle for your dowry; because you must know that your father is one of the wisest men in the world, and if he did not know that the right was with these people, and that what they say is true, he would not have followed them.”

‘The Princess answered—“I know that you are the most learned of all the Christians, what do you say of this religion?”

‘He replied—“It is the true faith, and their prophet is the one whom Christ has truly announced, and I am secretly of their belief. And I saw an Arab, one of them, when I was at the Deir,” and he related to her what passed between him and Warkah ibn Samet.

‘And she said, “I accept that which my father

<sup>1</sup> This is in allusion to a tunnel carried under the Euphrates, and by which communication was established between the two castles.

accepts, but keep your secret, lest you and I should be blamed."

'And Akshifat met Yukina, and they saluted each other and they descended from their horses to embrace, and then remounted and proceeded to the castle, and his (Yukina's) daughter met him, and he was overwhelmed with joy, and she wept aloud.

'But the king was intending to seize Yukina and his people, and to slay them with the sword. And he asked him, "O great chief, how did you find these accursed Arabs in their religion, their justice and equity, and their government?"

'Yukina answered—"The people say that they do not wish for the kingdom of this world, but the kingdom of the world to come, and that which belongs thereto, and yet they have conquered Syria and Egypt, and they have not changed their manners and customs, and this people from first to last only pretend to be just until they have conquered the country. So when I discovered their secrets and knew their true character, I ran away from them and left them, after I had imagined that they were in the right, and had given them good advice and had consigned to them Aka (Acre) and Sur (Tyre), and Latakiyeh and Antioch and Tripoli; but I hope to recover from them that which they have taken, for I have discovered that Christ is very angry with me for having quitted his religion, and neglected the sacrifices which he has commanded and enjoined to Peter and John."

'Then he feigned to cry and to bewail himself, and when Akshifat witnessed his actions and heard his

words they affected him and he said—"O chief, if you have repented your evil works, and have returned to the true religion, be assured of the acceptance of your repentance by God, and the passing away of your grief, and know that the gate of repentance is open to those who truly repent. The feast of the Cross is at hand in the course of twenty days, and Farinun, the holy man, is at the Deir al Sikr, which is only one farsakh distant; he is much respected in the religion of the Christians, and from his wisdom many learn and profit. And when the evening of the feast arrives we will go to him and take our offerings, and candles, and lamps of gold and silver, in fulfilment of our vows, to his Deir, and he will plunge you into the water of baptism and you will come out cleansed from all sins, and you will renew your Christianity, and be as your mother brought you into this world."

'And Yukina replied "I cannot wait until the feast, for I do not know when death may come."

'And his daughter said, "My lord, I will not let you go till I have satisfied my sight with you."

'And she persisted in her request earnestly, and kissed the ground before the King Akshifat, saying, "My lord, I beg you will permit my father to go with me to my castle."

'And the king replied, "I cannot give him up to anyone, but to-morrow night he shall be with you."

'And Abd Allah ibn Yukina, knowing that there would be pork in his food, said, "Oh, my lord, I am under infinite obligations to you, will you excuse me?"



‘Then the wuzîr said, “Yukina is very anxious to see his daughter, as you must know very well, perhaps it would be better that he should go to her to-night, and to-morrow night attend on your Highness.”

‘Upon this Yukina and his daughter rose up and passed by the secret passage to the other castle, and his followers with him, and when it was night, the princess said to Yukina—“Father, how is it that you have left the Arabs after having fought for their religion? Did you discover that the people were in the wrong, and that your first religion was the best?”

‘And as she repeated the question he said—“Wullaby, I only came from my love and fear for you, and I dread that we may be separated in the day of resurrection, and I have learned truly and verily that these people who are in the castle cannot resist the Arabs; for you must know that my castle was the strongest of all the forts in the country, and yet they took it from me. Fear God and do your best to free yourself from the hands of the devil and from hell-fire, and turn to God at once; for I swear to you, O my daughter, that there is no religion of God more excellent and perfect than the religion of Islam, which was the religion of Christ and the Prophets, but Peter caused the sect of the Christians to branch off, and he was the most learned of the Jews, and seceded with them from the straight path, and he gave them the laws which misled them, until they blasphemed that which Abraham and Moses had taught. But these Arabs follow that which God has commanded to his prophet Muhammad, in deed and word, and accept that which your father has

accepted, and do not follow that which your relations believed, that you may be saved."

'And she said, "O my father, be happy and satisfied; I and the wuzir Sharkub were agreed on this point before your arrival, and I have accepted that which you have accepted, and I believe that there is no god but God, and that Muhammad is his prophet."

'Yukina was delighted to hear that his daughter was of the faith of Islam, and he said—"What do you think of this accursed infidel?"

'And she replied, "Wullaby, Sharkub told me that he intended to seize you, and had said that you had only come to lay snares for him, and he has heard of what you have done."

'Yukina replied—"If this is the case, prepare a feast for him, and go to him and invite him thereto, he and his people, and I will command my followers to seize him; and if we do this the castle will be in our possession, since the wuzir is privy to our intention, and we will consign the two castles to the Mussulmans. And further, I will still make them believe that I have run away from the Mussulmans, until such time as I shall have taken possession of Karkisha, which may it please God will fall into the hands of the Mussulmans."

'The princess accordingly ordered her servants to prepare a feast and get ready sweetmeats and other things. And when she had done this she brought the tables and placed upon them all the dishes both hot and cold.

'Then she went by the subterranean passage to the second castle and stood before the king, and kissing the

ground in his presence, she said—"I am come to you that you and your people may grace with your presence my banquet in honour of my father's return to his religion."

' Upon this the king said to his wuzīr, "Guard my place and rule over it till my return."

' And he took with him his nobles, his followers, his chamberlains and his cousins, and he descended into the subterranean passage, the princess leading the way.

' And when this took place the wuzīr knew that he would not return.

' And when King Akshifat reached the castle, Yukina and his friends rose up to meet them. And when they met face to face, Yukina stepped forward to embrace Akshifat, and he pressed him to his breast. But he did this with the strength of a lion seizing its prey, and his friends seized those whom they were embracing in like manner and then cut off their heads, and as no noise or resistance was made, the people heard nothing of it.

' And after this they descended into the passage, and went to the place where the wuzīr was, and they found him waiting for them.

' When he saw them, he smiled and cursed the infidels, and he exclaimed, "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet."

' But no one knew what had happened to the king, and to his followers that were with him.

' And Yukina sat on the throne of Akshifat, and he began to call the people, and offered them Islamism, and those who refused were killed, but those who accepted were spared.

‘ And after a while Abd Allah ibn Inān and Sohal ibn Adi arrived with a thousand horse, and Yukina pretended to resist them, and he shammed fighting with them for five days, and they knew that it was a stratagem.

‘ Then he sent to them secretly to inform them of what had happened, and that he would consign the castle to them that very night. “ And I will pretend,” he added, “ to run away from you to the city of Karkisha, in order that it may, please God, be delivered into your hands.”

‘ And when night had come, he ordered Sharkub to consign the castle to them, while he himself passed over to the other side of the river.

‘ And this happened on the very day that a messenger arrived from Karkisha, bringing presents to Yukina, and congratulating him upon his return to the Christian religion.

‘ Yukina bade the messenger alight in the tents of his people, and whilst he and the messenger were talking, behold the Islam war cry and the call to prayer resounded from the castle, and Yukina said, “ By my faith, these Arabs are devils.”

‘ And the Mussulmans cried out, “ Where is Yukina, that we may cut him down with our swords ? ”

‘ Upon this Yukina rose up, and gathering his followers together, he fled with them, and his daughter, and the messenger who had come from the king of Karkisha.’

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE RIVER HABOR.

SOUTH of the Bushir or Abû-Shehr hills, the country has a more open aspect, and is in part cultivated by the Agada'at Arabs on the Syrian side, and the Buggarah tribe on that of Mesopotamia. These settled tribes are defended from the inroads of the Bedawin by quadrangular mud forts.

About three miles below the two castles of Zilba and Riba, the stream is much divided by islands, and at the same point, and beyond the village of Abû Sabay, the ruins of a brick building were seen on the right bank apparently corresponding to the monastery of Farinun, mentioned by King Akshifat as being one farsakh from Zilba, and who calls it Deir Sikr, but it was named to us Tibni.

The banks of the river and the islands were covered with grasses and brushwood, interspersed with groves of poplar. At a point where cliffs of breccia and selenitic sandstone advanced upon the stream, the respective villages of Sheikh Tuma and of Sheikh Alwan were to be seen on the right and left banks.

Beyond the latter were some extensive mounds of ruin, denoting the former existence of a site of some

magnitude. These ruins were now known as Sur al Humar. There are also remains of an ancient canal, which taking its departure from below Riba passes in the rear of these ruins, on to Karkisha, and the river Khabūr.

Isidorus of Charax has in the same district Thilladamirrhadā, which he describes as a royal mansion, and below that Basileia, another regal abode, with a temple of Diana (Anahīd), erected by Darius, and a canal which he referred to the times of Semiramis—that is to say, to fabulous times.

Rennell also notices the canal under that name.

D'Anville has in the district between Zenobia and Deir a mountain called Elteroftrovil, and a rocky point designated as Dismonbate, from notices given by the Venetian traveller Balbi. These would apparently correspond with the cliffs at Sheikh Tuma.

Beyond the site of this once prosperous Persian city, but of which so little is known, the river became very tortuous, leaving extensive alluvial plains between the bends, which are, however, generally cultivated. There are two fords in this part of the river, one called Muthlīm, the other Lubtar.

On the hills on the Syrian side were some ruins designated as Tabūs, and below a conical hill called Shifāl Ayāsh was a spring giving off naphtha and bitumen, known as Aīn Abūna or Abū Juma, from a ruinous structure close by.

There are other springs of the same description in the neighbourhood, and they occur where the volcanic rocks—offshoots of the Bushir hills—have broken

the marls and gypsum, which are superimposed by breccias and selenitic sandstones, and where they crop out to-day.

After a navigation of fifty miles through a difficult part of the river, but without any misadventure, we arrived at a spot where the stream was again divided by an island, just above the town of Deir, built upon an eminence or extensive mound of debris, and we took the channel to the right, which was the most shallow and narrow of the two, but which enabled us to bring to immediately before the town.

At this very moment, a dense flight of locusts was passing over like a cloud, or rather like the dust raised by a hurricane on the desert, and it positively obscured our movements for a brief period.

Deir is a small town, containing some five hundred houses, with a population of about two thousand five hundred inhabitants, but it is a place of importance to the Arabs, who dwell in the villages around, who have not many permanent sites of the kind, and who hence congregate here to sell their produce and to make the few purchases demanded by their simple wants.

Hence is it also the seat of government; but the Osmanlis are generally wise enough to leave the power in the hands of an influential Arab Sheikh, he guaranteeing a certain amount of annual contributions.

The town, and its central and house-covered mound, lay in the midst of a level, clayey, and sun-burnt plain; but these disadvantages of position had been successfully combated by industry. The soil was irrigated by innumerable canals, and the gardens were watered by

the usual buckets swung upon weighted poles to act as levers. Hence, though there were few trees or shrubs, the country around produced, during the short Arab summer, much rice, maize, and other grain. The first few date-trees made their appearance here, but they were of stunted growth, and apparently in an uncongenial soil or climate.

Captain Lynch, of the 'Tigris,' being deputed to pay the usual formal visit of ceremony to the Sheikh, he came on board the 'Euphrates' and asked me to accompany him. It proved, however, to be an unlucky trip, for during my absence the boatswain was struck down by sun apoplexy, and the two Stauntons had to be fetched from the 'Tigris' to attend to him.

The word *Deir* signifies a habitation generally, but it is applied to a monastery as its special signification. D'Herbelot, says in his '*Bibliothèque Orientale*,' that it also applies to a hermitage or chapel. Hence it is probable that this was the site of a Christian community and monastery, known as *Deir Abuna*, before the rise of Islamism, and that the ruins of the place are now covered by the huts of the Arabs, amongst which the Sheikh's *serai* stands prominent.

D'Anville supposed, or rather advocated, the derivation of the name from the Persian, *dar*, 'a gate;' because he sought here for a pass corresponding to *Thapsacus* of old, and in which hypothesis he was, strange to say, upheld by so critical a geographer as Rennell.

In order to bring about such an identification, these two able and distinguished geographers had to invert



the statements of Xenophon, who makes it fifteen parasangs from the palace and park of Belësis to Thapsacus, and fifty parasangs from Thapsacus to the Araxes or Khaboras; and to argue that the Athenian historian intended to say fifty parasangs from the palace to the pass, and fifteen from the pass to the river.

This is a totally unnecessary perversion of a most accurate and careful recorder of distances, for Thapsacus, where we have placed it, is fifteen parasangs, or forty-five miles, from Balis, and the river Khabūr is fifty parasangs, or 150 miles, from the pass.

We have also the authority of Idrisi, to the effect that the name of Deir was not derived from the Persian, but that it was so called from Deir Abūna,<sup>1</sup> the name of a monastery which formerly stood on the spot, and which was of such great antiquity that, according to traditions preserved by the people, no less a person than the prophet Noah—known to Mussulmans as Mih al Nabi, as also as Al Nagi, and then again, as Sheikh al Mūr ilin, or ‘the head of all the prophets,’ resided there after leaving the ark, and was buried there.

While we were at Deir, Colonel Chesney resolved upon staying a day to experiment upon the bitumen, which is so abundant in the neighbourhood, as to its capability for heating the boilers. The experiments were made on board the ‘Tigris,’ and not being found to answer by itself, it was mixed with stones, earth, and dry dung, the ordinary fuel of the Arabs.

The immense quantity of combustibile matter, how-

<sup>1</sup> The name as we have seen is also preserved in that of the naphtha spring—Ain Abuna.

ever, caused so much smoke to be given off, before complete combustion could be brought about, as to choke the vents and altogether to impede the supply of air necessary for the support of combustion. It might have answered better if mixed with cinders, and several useful descriptions of fuel have been introduced in this country, made of cinders and tar or petroleum.

It is not much more than twenty-five to thirty miles from Deir to the mouth of the Khabūr, and excepting at Deir itself, where the river is encumbered with islands, the navigation was free and open, the banks being high and wooded. A few villages of the Bak Karah Arabs are alone met with at distant intervals.

As we did not quit Deir, however, till the afternoon, it was evening before we arrived at the important junction of the greatest of the Mesopotamian rivers with the Euphrates; and while our steamer brought to on the left bank, a little below the junction of the rivers, the Colonel went on board the 'Tigris,' as the steamer of lesser draught, and ascended the Khabūr, without interruption, until compelled to return by darkness.

An Arab town, scattered amid ancient ruins and groves, which here and there disclosed some crumbling edifice of greater pretensions, was all that I could see to mark this once important city, called Kirki by the Assyrians (from inscriptions since discovered), Circesium or Kirkesium by the Romans, and Karkisiya or Karkisha by the Arabs; but it is equally familiar to them, from its extensive ruins, as Abû Seraï, or the 'father of palaces.'

Unfortunately, night coming on did not allow us an opportunity of exploring the vestiges of its former grandeur. This was, at all events to myself, a source of great disappointment.

The mosquitoes were more troublesome at our anchorage than they had ever been hitherto on the descent of the river. Several attempts to land on the left bank of the Khabūr were effectually repulsed by these little winged assailants, who filled the eyes, nose, and mouth instantly. The attendants waited at table with their hands and face muffled up, and the next morning I had several men applying to me for relief from their bites.

The Arabs brought us here the skin of a beaver for sale. They said that this animal, so valuable for its fur, was met with on the Khabūr. This has since been proved to be the case by Sir Austin Henry Layard. But it is a particular species, not having a flat tail wherewith to construct dams, but a round tail.

The river Khabūr, which derives considerable importance from its watering all central and northern Mesopotamia, is fed by various tributaries, the relations of which have only lately been fully established.

The central and main tributary flows from the Karajah Tagh, in the district of Diyarbekr. It is called Jahjakjah, and is fed by several tributaries, one of which waters the ancient city of Sinna, now Koh-Hissar.<sup>1</sup> The next great tributary corresponds to the ancient Mygdonius. It has its sources in the Jebel Tūr, the ancient Masius, and flows past Nisibis. Other

<sup>1</sup> This was ascertained upon the occasion of my second journey.

tributaries flow from the Masius, in the neighbourhood of Mardin, and from Dara, renowned in the wars of the Romans and the Persians. Another and more easterly tributary is known as the Hassawi.

The other tributaries to the Khabūr have their origin in Central Mesopotamia, and among the most remarkable of these are the springs at Ras al Aïn, or the 'head waters,' the Ressaina of the Romans, ennobled by Gordian's victory over Narsis. Next in importance are the sources of the Huali, 'the changeable or variable,' the Hermus of the Romans, said by Forbes ('Journal of the Royal Geographical Society,' vol. ix. p. 422) to have its sources two hours NW. of Lake Khatuniyah, probably at the Hileia or Eleia of classical antiquity, and which, according to Ammianus (xviii. 16) and Rufus Festus (27) was twenty-five miles from Singara. The Hauli is also fed by streams descending from the Sinjar hills, where Forbes enumerates the Saluk, Sinjar, and Sakininiyah, and where Idrisi also notices the Aïn el Jebel, or 'spring of the mountain.' The river Tharthar, upon which the great city of the plain, Al Hadhr or Hatra, had to depend for its existence, was, according to Abû-l-fada, fed by a canal drawn from the Huali. Its waters are generally brackish, and I passed a night on its banks a few years after the time I am now speaking of, in company with Sir Austin Henry Layard and Mr. Mitford, when its waters were barely potable.

Forbes has also a stream coming from an isolated and conical volcanic mountain, known from its remarkable distinctness from all other adjacent heights as the

Kaukab or 'Star,' and which is situated between the longer ranges of Abd ul Aziz and those of Sinjar. The Theodosian Tables also notice the Fons Scobore, and Pliny, Diosphage, which may be interpreted 'the fountain of Jupiter.' The Orientals speak hyperbolically of the sources of the Khabūr being three hundred in number.

A passage in Ptolemy has given me much trouble, as it has also puzzled other commentators. The Alexandrian geographer notices a river which he calls the Saocoras as originating near Nisibis, and therefore, apparently, the same as the Mygdonius; but he describes it as flowing into the Euphrates, and not into the Khaboras, and this beyond a site called Bethauna, which again is beyond Zaita. A river having such a course is consequently introduced into D'Anville's and other maps of Mesopotamia as extending, according to some, even as far as the Wadi Sur on the Lower Euphrates. But as no such stream or river was met with by the Expedition, it would appear then to have been a tributary to the Khabūr, and have flowed by it to the Euphrates.

It is remarkable that Ortelius in his 'Geographical Treasury,' on the word Saocoras, quotes one Andreas Masius, by his name—a local authority—as asserting that the name of that river is Hur-muz or Ormuz—the Hermus of the middle ages, and the Hassawir or Hauli of the present day. It is not impossible, however, that as a canal was drawn from that river to the Tharthar going to Al Hadhr, that another may have also been once carried from thence to countries south of the Khabūr.

It is all the more important to establish the identity of this great river of Mesopotamia with the Habor of Holy Writ, as in the endeavours made by the American missionaries to identify the Khaldaean or Nestorian Christians with the lost tribes of Israel, the Habor has been sought for in an insignificant stream, also called Al Khabūr, which waters the Romaion Ager of Procopius at Zakhū in Kurdistan.

It is recorded that the children of Israel were carried captives into Assyria in the ninth year of Hoshea, and were placed there in Halah and in Habor, by the river of Gozan (2 Kings xvii. 6), which passage is read by Gesenius as 'in Chalites and on the Chabor, a river of Gozan.'

Dr. Grant has identified Halah with Hatarah, a poor village of Izēdīs, without a name or fragment of antiquity in the neighbourhood. Sir Henry Rawlinson has on his part identified Halah with the Holwan of the Syrians, and the Sar-Puli-Zohab pass in Kurdistan.

But whether we read 'Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan,'<sup>1</sup> or 'in Chalites and on the Habor, a river of Gozan,' still the two places are brought into juxtaposition and must be sought for in the same region or district.

If we can find Habor we get nigh to Halah, whether Habor be a city or a river, or as is more likely both. Gozan simply signifies pasture or pasture-land, and the banks of the Khabūr are far more renowned pasture-lands among the Arabs than are the Zozans or Gozans

<sup>1</sup> 'Into Halah and Habor and Haran and to the river of Gozan.'  
(1 Chron. v. 26.)

—the alpine summer pastures of the Khaldaeans. The Romans also called the province Gauzanitis.

The wonderful discovery made by Sir Austin Henry Layard of Assyrian remains on the banks, testifies that the valley was dotted with cities and towns in their time, as it is also well known that it constituted their high road in their frequent invasions of Palestine and Egypt.

The identity of the Habor of the Old Testament with the Khabūr is further established by its being mentioned in 2 Kings xix. 12 in connection with Haran (still so called), and Rezeph—a well known marble city on the high road from Tadmor (Palmyra) to Thipsah (Thapsacus). A connection thus established removes the identification of the site with one in Kurdistan altogether.

The Habor further preserved its name in the Greek, although scarcely any two writers agreed in its orthography. Zozimus writes Aboras; Strabo, Aborras; Ptolemy, Khaboras; and Isidorus of Charax, Abouras. It is still called the Khabūr. Xenophon alone called it the Araxes. As it was a highway in the time of the Assyrians, so it continued to be the same in the time of the Khalifat, and several notices are given by the Arab geographers of the towns or stations upon its banks.

Commencing at Karkisha or Karkisiya, this high road led, according to Idrisi, to Makisin, a distance of twenty-one Arabian miles of sixty to a degree; thence to Al Nahr Aïn, or the spring of the river, eighteen miles; fifteen miles beyond was Sikat al Abbas, the royal abode of Abbas; twenty-one further, Aïn al Jebel,

the mountain spring; fifteen more, Sinjar; twenty-one, Tel el Chair, now Tel Afar; and lastly, fifteen beyond that, Balad, now Aski Mosul, or 'old Mosul,' and which under the name of Balada was a Christian episcopacy.

We have now on the same river Karkisha<sup>1</sup> or Abû Seraï; then Maksin—the Makisin of Idrisi; then El Murgadah; then Fah-jami (Al Fahdīn of the Arab geographer), with Shemsham on the right or opposite bank; then Ledjmiyah, also on the right bank; then Shahdadi (the Sakkat or Sikat al Abbas of Idrisi and Sawida of the Romans); and lastly, Araban of the Oriental geographers, and Arban of Layard, from whose important discoveries it appears to have been the chief site on the river.

If this is the case, Halah, being at or near to Karkisha, there is evidently every reason to believe that this was the city of Habor, on the river of the same name, and in Gozan—the Gauzanitis of the Romans. Layard also identifies the place with the Arbonai of Judith. And as with the river Habor, then Aborras or Khaboras, so Habor may have become Arbonai, and lastly, Araban and Arban.

Xenophon may have given the name of Araxes to the river from this site, for as Sir Henry Rawlinson has observed, the prefix Ar, Ara, and Arta (or Arba) is in use in every single branch of Arian palæography with the exception of the Zend ('Journ. Roy. Asiat. Soc.' x. 55, and xi. 33).

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Haukal describes Karkisha as being in his time a place of some importance, and as abounding in fine prospects, cultivated lands and gardens.



A number of other sites, most of them of more or less archæological or historical interest, are grouped around the Abd ul Aziz hills, more particularly on the river of Ras al Aïn, and near the volcanic cone of Kaukab, for details of which I must refer the reader to Layard's 'Travels in Mesopotamia.'

The city at the mouth of the Khabūr was called by Ptolemy Khabora avowedly after the name of the river, and it is also called the Castle of the Aborenses in Simocatta (iv. 10). Al Wakedi also speaks of a castle called Khabūr, as well as of Karkisha, and it is noticed by Schultens in his 'Life of Saladin.'

The Carchemish so particularly alluded to by Jeremiah (xlv. 2) as a place on the river Euphrates where, uniting all the power of the Assyrian Empire, King Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh-Necho and drove the Egyptians altogether out of Asia, is stated by Benjamin of Tudela—a high authority in all that concerns Jewish legends—to be the same as Karkisha, and the identity is admitted by Bochart (Phaleg, 289), and by other learned Biblical commentators.

But modern Assyriologists have from fragmentary inscriptions identified Karkisha with a site called Kirki, and Kargamus—the ancient stronghold of the Hittites—with Carchemish. We have already alluded to the difficulties attendant upon this latter identification. Both sites were on the highways of Assyrian irruptions—the one to Syria, the other to Palestine—and hence there may have been two places bearing approximately the same name, and confused by the Hebrew historians. In the same way we have Habor, in the Book of Kings, identified with the Kobar or Chebar of Ezekiel, yet the

two rivers were the one in Babylonia, the other in Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup>

‘To the Chebar,’ says Layard, ‘were transported by the Assyrian king after the destruction of Samaria, the captive children of Israel, and on its banks “the heavens were opened” to Ezekiel and “he saw visions of God,” and spake his prophecies to his brother exiles. Around Arban may have been pitched the tents of the sorrowing Jews, as those of the Arabs were during my visit. To the same pastures they led their sheep, and they drank of the same waters. Then the banks of the river were covered with towns and villages, and a palace-temple still stood on the mound, reflected in the transparent stream.’ But this applies to the Chebar—not to the Khabūr.

‘We know,’ adds the same writer, ‘that Jews still lingered in the cities of the Khabūr until long after the Arab invasion; and we may perhaps recognise in the Jewish communities of Ras al Aïn, at the sources of the river, and of Karkisia or Carchemish, at its confluence with the Euphrates, visited and described by Benjamin of Tudela in the latter end of the twelfth century of the Christian era, the descendants of the captive Israelites.’ This is so far correct.

There is a site on the right, on the left bank of the Khabūr, nearly opposite to Karkisha, which is designated as Kalneh, and which Colonel Chesney thought might represent the Halah or Calah of the Captivity.

Under the Romans Karkisha was still known as a colonial and limitrophal city under the name of Cercusium or Kerkusium; and when Trajan by his conquests

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 12 and 13.

extended the Empire to the borders of the Persian Gulf, his successor Hadrian hastened to bring the limits of the Empire to within their former circumscription.

‘The god Terminus,’ says Gibbon, ‘who resisted the majesty of Jupiter, submitted to the authority of the King Hadrian, to the infinite delight of St. Augustin, and the resignation of the Eastern conquests of Trajan was the first measure of his reign.’

The new extension given to the Empire by Severus had the same brief duration ; Rome indeed could never permanently subject the Persian power beyond the Habor.

Gordian perished in the neighbourhood, and by the overthrow and captivity of Valerian, the Roman name was humbled on the Euphrates, till Dioclesian undertook the kingly task of re-establishing the frontiers of the Empire, on which occasion he embellished the city, and fortified it with walls and lofty towers.

Galerius was soon, however, called to the defence of the same frontiers, which he successfully performed by the engagement at Eleia or Huaili ; and Julian found, on his invasion of the Persian Empire, what his historian describes as a strong place, well built and of goodly appearance.

Julian’s visit is the last we have in history of Cersusium or Kerkusium. In the time of Justinian and Anastasius the boundary of the Low Empire still extended nominally from Trebizond to Kerkusium, but during the feeble reigns of succeeding Cæsars it soon receded to Callinicus, and last held out, as we have seen, at Hierapolis and the territories watered by the Bilecha or Royal river.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE CONQUEST OF MESOPOTAMIA BY THE SARACENS.

THE military ardour and daring of the champions of Islamism by no means come out in so strong a light in the history of the conquest of Mesopotamia as have been imparted to it in that of events which preceded this conquest.

We possess the history of the early propagandists of the faith in the pages of Abû-l-fada or Abulpheda, of Ibn Athir, Ibn Hamdûn, Ibn Khalikan, Tabari, Sayid ibn Batrik (Eutychius), Elmacin (Al Makin ibn Amîd), and Abû-l-farag (Abulfaragius), and made familiar to us by the writings of Pococke, Ockley, Gibbon, Crichton, Cooke Taylor, and others, who have, following their Mussulman guides, more or less glorified the exploits of the companions and first followers of the Prophet.

Among them, Abû Obaidah, the Khalif's lieutenant, and conqueror of Syria; Khaled, the slaughterer of the Damascenes, the smiter of the tribes of Gassan, and victor over the Persian host; the so-called sword of Muhammad, Ayad ibn Ghanîm, the subjugator of Mesopotamia; Dahrar ibn Alazuar, the prisoner of Heraclius; Suhail ibn Adi, Abdallah ibn Annan, and many other gallant leaders of the Saracens.

But Abû Obaidah seems to have limited his operations mainly to issuing orders to his subordinates or writing letters to the Khalif, and neither the renowned Khaled nor Ayad ibn Ghanîm did much themselves. Yahna, Patriarch of Rahabah (Rehoboth) surrendered to Suhail ibn Adi. Yukina captured the castles of Zilba and Riba by stratagem, and so it was with Karkisha.

None of these heroes of an early Islamism occupy so prominent a position in the conquest of Mesopotamia as the arch-traitor and inventor of stratagems—Yukina—the once Christian governor of Aleppo. From being a zealous defender of the Christians, he had become their inveterate enemy; but while as a Christian he had defended his country and his faith with the prudence of a general and the courage of a soldier, as a Mussulman he served the cause of the Saracens to a still greater extent by stratagems which appear in the present day like the romances of an Arabian storyteller.

Yukina, to whom, with his more pious brother John, the government of the important province of Aleppo had been entrusted by Heraclius, had, it must be admitted, strong grounds for dislike to his brother Christians, but not to the extent of palliating his subsequent treachery.

When Kinisrîn (ancient Chalcis) had been subjected by Abû Obaidah, Yukina advanced against the Saracens and destroyed a great number of the enemy, yet at that very time his brother and some of the principal inhabitants of Aleppo were negotiating terms of

surrender without any regard to the successes of their chief.

When this came to the knowledge of Yukina, he turned his arms against his countrymen, killing many of them and slaying his brother John, who had the reputation of being a kind of monk, with his own hands.

After this he prepared to defend himself in the castle against Khaled and Dahrar ibn Alazuar, who were deputed by Abû Obaidah to besiege the place. Yukina however defended himself so resolutely that the castle was only captured after four, some say five months' siege, and that by stratagem.

Yukina, disgusted at the cowardly conduct of the Aleppines, who had abetted the cause of his enemies during the whole siege, then turned Mussulman and devoted his energies to the success of the Saracens.

The first place he gained over to them was the at that time strong castle of Azass, now a mound of ruin, and this he accomplished by a stratagem similar to that which he adopted on most subsequent occasions in Syria, as recorded by Ockley from Al Wakedî, and as it will now be seen also in Mesopotamia on the authority of the same historian, in writings which by some accident or other were not available to either Gibbon or Ockley. Disguising a hundred Saracen horsemen as Greeks, he bade a thousand Saracens pretend to pursue them as if they were enemies, whilst the pursued should take refuge as if in distress in the city.

Luckily Theodore, the governor of Antioch, got word of this notable project, and he disconcerted it by making Yukina and his followers prisoners. Nor would the

traitor have been probably left to carry out all the further ignoble stratagems which render his name notorious in the disasters that befell Christendom in the East, had it not been for the base treachery of Leon and Luke, the sons of Theodore, the former of whom had fallen in love with a daughter of Yukina's, and who killed their father, restored liberty to the renegade chief, and delivered up the place to the Saracens.

Yukina adopted a similar feint in regard to Antioch itself, and he so imposed upon Heraclius, that he by his intercession saved the life of Dahrar, who had been made prisoner with his two hundred followers. He was also employed to escort the Emperor's daughter, and was ultimately left in charge of the city, whilst Heraclius went forth to encounter the Saracens under Abû Obaidah after they had made themselves masters of the Iron Bridge on the Orontes. Needless to say, that it was to his treachery that Al Wakedi attributes the fall of Antioch after the flight of the Emperor Heraclius.

Possession was also obtained by a similar stratagem of other strongholds, when it might be supposed that the report of such transparent devices would have spread all over the country, but which, on the contrary, were prosecuted with almost undeviating success, until not a stronghold in the possession of the Christians in North Syria or in Mesopotamia remained to be beguiled by the wily ex-patriarch.

While Yukina was at Tripoli, some fifty vessels arrived laden with merchandise from Crete and Cyprus, bringing also arms and ammunition for the troops of Constantine. The arch-traitor received them as a friend,

and he sailed with them to Tyre, pretending that he was conveying arms and provisions to the garrison. Having, however, been betrayed by one of his followers, he was made prisoner and put in irons, until he was rescued by one Basil, who had been converted to Islamism, as it is said, by a miracle, and he was once more left at liberty to carry out his nefarious schemes.

The fall of Tripoli and Tyre so discouraged Constantine as to induce him to withdraw his forces to Constantinople just as the defeat at the Iron Bridge and loss of Antioch had discomfited Heraclius.

It is manifest from these details that Yukina's duplicity did more towards the subjugation of North Syria by the Saracens than their own much vaunted prowess in arms, and so we shall find was also the case in regard to the conquest of Mesopotamia.

It appears from the narrative of El Wakedi, that at that epoch the regions between the Euphrates and the Tigris were held by the Christians, and that these were under a king who was called Shariad or Shariyad—a name which like the title of Abgarus, assumed by the kings of Osrhoene or Edessa, appears to have been a title of honour, or of a dynasty, for we find it also applied to his nephew, the governor, or so-called king of Karkisha.

Shariyad, the uncle, resided at Ras el Aïn, 'the head spring,' the Rish Aïn of the Jews, and the Resaina of the Romans. From thence he held dominion over the Khabūr, the Bilecha, and the Euphrates, as far as to Karkisha. He was in alliance with the contemporary Christian princes of Edessa, Nisibin, Mardin, Diyarbekr,



Mosul, and Hizan or Hisn Keifa on the river Tigris and the Saphe of the Romans.

It will be as well, however, after this short summary of the state of things at the time, to let the Arabian historian, Al Wakedi, speak for himself, premising that he does not entitle his work, as Ockley and Gibbon supposed, the 'Conquest of Diyarbekr,' which with Diyar-Rabbia (Gozan or Gausanitis), and Diyar-Mudhar (Padan Aram, Osroene) was a district of Mesopotamia, but 'the conquest of Jezireh,' the peninsula, or Mesopotamia—land between the two rivers—proper.

It will be remembered that we left Yukina, after delivering up the two castles of Zilba and Riba to the Saracens, feigning to run away with his daughter and followers and the envoy from Karkisha; and El Wakedi relates that he has it from Saïf ibn Omar el Tamimi; that upon his arrival at Karkisha he related to the governor or king what had happened with regard to the two castles, and how the Arabs had taken them. When the king heard these things, he was terrified and filled with apprehension lest his 'kingdom' should be also taken from him.

'But Yukina said to him—"O my lord, do not fear, we will fight for you till all of us are dead, and if they come upon us and besiege us, I will engage to kill them. And I will ensnare their bravest men, and they shall not do you any harm."

'And he trusted in his words and invested him with a robe of honour, and bade him welcome to his palace. And that very night he sent a messenger to his uncle, the king of the land of Rabia, who was at Ras al Aïn,

to ask him to come to his assistance against the Arabs and to inform him of the taking of Riba and Zilba, and that Yukina had run away from the Arabs after having served with them.

‘The messenger travelled to Deir Sariah, and from thence he went to Mijdel, and from that place to Ras al Aïn, and he found that the king had repaired the forts and walls of his city very strongly, and had widened the trenches, and had pitched his tents and banners to the west, on the road to Maukab (Kaukab?), where he was preparing to resist Ayad ibn Ghanîm el Ashari.

‘And he had gathered together the Arabs of Jezireh (Mesopotamia) the sons of Taghallab and Ayadi; the es Shamta with their chiefs, viz. Naufel ibn Abazan and Ramid ibn Aasin, and Asjaa ibn Wazil, and Abayessireh ibn Aamir, and he said to them :—

“O ye brave among the Arabs, we have always taken care of your young and aged, and have allowed you to live in our land, and to cultivate it and to eat the produce thereof; we therefore expect that you will evince your zeal, for you and we are one. These Arabs your cousins have already conquered Syria, and the country of the Hubt (Copts) which is Egypt, and they are not satisfied therewith, and have come against us to contend with us for our kingdom, and they will turn us out of our land, and I am in fear for you, because the people have set their minds upon conquering, and they will not leave you, nor remain away from you, nor will they be content if you give them up Jezireh, unless you adopt their religion; if therefore you think it right to fight for your religion and your families, we will stand

by you, for God has appointed us over the people, and the land is ours and yours, and if it comes to such an extremity we will die one death and our memory will remain to eternity."

'And they consented to this, and they all swore and covenanted that they would die by the same sword. Upon this the king brought out presents and robes of honour, and arms and accoutrements, for distribution among them.

'And when the messenger whom the chief of Karkisha had sent came and stood before him, and presented the letter to him, and he had read it and understood its meaning, he demanded assistance from Wartabek the Amīr, who was ruler of Tel Mazīn, and Nuceni (Nineveh), and Tel el Arab, and Abadīn, and Mushrab, and Sawilea (Sawida), and sent with him four thousand horse to Karkisha.

'These troops passed over the bridge which was on the Khabūr, and this bridge had pillars of iron to which were attached chains, and on these chains were boards, and they then dug a large and deep trench round the town and fortified themselves strongly, and then awaited the arrival of the Mussulmans.

'When Yukina ran away from Riba and the Mussulmans had taken it, Sharkub pointed out to them the secret passage to the second castle, and they passed by it and took the castle, and killed those who were in it, and they took the property of Akshifat and his treasures and they sent them all to Ayād, and they wrote a secret letter to inform him of what Yukina had done, and he thanked him and prayed for him.

‘And he sent word to Inān and to Sohail that they should take care of the two castles, and leave therein the horses taken from the Christians and go to Karkisha and besiege it.

When Abd Allah and Sohail received the letter from Ayād they obeyed his commands, and they appointed over the western fort (Zilba) Akhwās ibn Ghanīm il Medini, with a hundred horse; and they proceeded to Karkisha, and when there remained only the river between them and it, some of the inhabitants pointed out to them a ford, which they passed by night, and they came up to the enemies of God.

‘And they sent to Mashakh and Majūliyah and Tadin and Sur, and they promised them immunity from pillage and that they should preserve their habitations, and they added, “If we succeed we will be kind to you, and if we do not you will be thankful to us for our generosity.”

‘When Abd Allah ibn Inān had thus gained over the people residing in the villages round Karkisha and had promised that their property should be respected, he sent one of his followers named Shamal ibn Sabek il Tamani, who was one of the companions of the Prophet, with a hundred horsemen, to procure provisions and money from the environs of Maksin and Araya.

‘And Shamal went with his followers, and when he was near Thamaniyah (Thannuniormega of Procopius) he became envious of the place and desired to plunder it.

‘And while thus excited by cupidity Naufal ibn Mazin il Ayadi came out against him with five hundred

Christian horsemen, and he recovered the plunder from him, and fell upon him with all his followers.

‘And on this Shamal called out to his men, “O brave cavaliers! know that your enemies are upon you in great numbers and nothing will save you but the goodness of your cause. Therefore fight bravely and do not hesitate to contend for the pardon of God. Hasten that we may gain paradise by dying in battle against the Infidels.”

‘And his followers fought bravely to a man, and they unfurled the standards of truth, and bade farewell to this world, and fought as though they were bearing witness to the last day, and their souls were receiving the recompense due to their holy deeds.

‘Thus stimulated they did not cease fighting until thirty of them were slain and twenty-three were taken prisoners, among whom was their chief Shamal ibn Sabek. The rest ran away to the army of the Muslims, and they related to their friends what the Christians had done to them, on which they were very angry and said, “Keep this thing secret, lest the enemies of God should rejoice over us.”

‘And when Naufal had taken them prisoners, he bound them with cords and tied them together, and fastening their legs to horses, he proceeded with them to Ras al Aïn.

‘And there he was informed that the king was at Burj al Tair (the Bird’s tower), on the side of Kaukab, and he brought them into his presence, and when he inquired as to who they were, Naufal informed him that they had plundered Thamaniyeh, but that Christ

had given him victory over them, and he had killed thirty of the bravest of them, and taken these twenty-three prisoners. Whereupon the king ordered their heads to be cut off.

‘Shamal ibn Sabek was the last whom they brought forward; he was a remarkably handsome man, and when they were going to cut off his head the Patriarch of Tutha (Kafr Tutha, or ‘the place of mulberries,’ now Kafr juza, near Madiyat in Mount Masius), interceded for him, and the king made a present of him to the patriarch, and he took him to his country, and placed him in his garden to cultivate it.

‘And the news came to Ayād, who had already passed near to Rakka, and when he became aware of the resistance of Shariyad and his troops, he said, “Let us go and attack the people of Roha” (Edessa).

‘Khaled replied, “Will you leave an army prepared to meet you, and fight with you, and go to the cities? You ought first to meet this enemy, and if you conquer them, then proceed to what country you please, and God will give you the victory.”

‘And Ayād consented to this, and while he was in this mood the spies arrived and informed him that Shariyad, the king of Ras al Aïn, and Tutha, chief of Kafr (Hisn Keifa), and the rest of the chiefs had collected an army of a hundred thousand Greeks, Armenians, and Arabs; but that the Arabs had separated from them, with their families and children, and that they had departed from the Greeks one day’s journey, and were come towards the Mussulmans.

‘When Ayād heard this he sent Walid ibn Akbeh

to them, and he assembled their chiefs and said to them, “O ye brave Arabs, do ye not know that foresight is better than repentance? You are not more powerful in battle than we are, nor is your land wider than that of the Ghassān, nor is there any one of you like to Jibleh ibn Ayham. The enemy were sixty thousand strong, and he conquered them with sixty of our troops. It is better that you should return to us and be on our side, and that we should be brethren together in this world and in the next.”

‘And Ayadi ibn Tirab and Ayadi es Shamta, their greatest infidels and unbelievers, arose and went to the Greeks, but the sons of Taghabt and Rabiye joined the army of Ayād, and turned Mussulmans. Ayād praised and encouraged them, and said to them, “God has been very gracious to you by your coming to us, and your having renounced the worship of the cross, and God has ennobled our religion and glorified our Prophet, and he has promised us—and his promise is true—that we shall conquer the kingdom of Kesri (Chosroes) and Kaiser (Cæsar), and that we shall take their churches.”’

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE FALL OF KARKISHA.

‘IN the mean time Shariyad (the nephew, king of Karkisha) assembled his patriarchs and said to them—“Ye must know I have heard that in times past kings used to contend in person. I therefore wish to go out to-morrow with the troops to meet these people, in the hope that I may vanquish them; and I wish that you should resist me, and draw your swords, and pretend that you want to kill me, and I will then say to you, ‘Surrender yourselves to these people, that I may see you pass under their yoke;’ and do you appear to wish to go against them, and do not put up your swords, but fall upon me a second time, upon which I will run away to them, and I will stand before their chiefs, and I will tell them that I wished to surrender to them, but that you revolted against me, and were intent upon killing me, and behold, I am come to you! Then, when the attention of the Mussulmans shall be turned away from me, I will fall upon their chief and kill him, and run away back again to you.”

‘And Wartabek the Armenian said to him—“How shall we permit you to risk your life? If you do this,



we cannot trust the Arabs, and we are afraid that the king will be angry with us and will say, ‘How is it that you allowed him to risk his life in this way?’ ”

‘Upon which Yukina said—“O king! this sayid (lord) is right in what he has said. How can we allow you to go to these people? But I will contrive something easier.”

‘Shariyad and Rubil the Armenian asked, “What is the stratagem you propose?”

‘He said—“Let us go out to them all together and meet them, and show fight to the utmost of our power; and when the Arabs have approached us (for you must know that there is a party of Greeks among their soldiers who have accepted their religion, as I did), and when they come near us, and have turned upon us, we will send to them a messenger suing for peace, and he shall say to them, ‘We want ten of your chiefs that we may decide what is to be between us, in hopes that we may make peace.’ And when they come into our power we will seize them, and draw our swords in the presence of their friends and will say: ‘Either you will abandon the siege, or we will cut off their heads.’ And when the people see that we are in earnest, they will wish to have their chiefs back with them, and then we will agree with them to give them up if they will go away from us; for the Arabs, if they promise a thing, they will stand by it. And we will say to them, ‘You have taken Ras el Aïn, and the two forts and the large cities, and we now think it will be best to make a truce with you for a year, after which we will either

accept your religion or go away to the land of the Greeks.”’<sup>1</sup>

‘Then Rubil the Armenian said—“What if they were to send us those who are of no credit, or even if they were their chiefs, and we should seize them as you have said, and should threaten them with death; suppose they should not listen to us, what shall we do then?”

‘Upon this Yukina pretended to be very angry, and swore by the Musseeh (Messiah)—“The dread of these people has filled your hearts, and you will never prosper; I swear to you that I fought them bravely in my castle, and if it had not been for one of my slaves called Damis Abû l’Hûl who betrayed me, they would never have reached me or have overcome me; and this your country is fortified, and there is no access to it except from two places, and your wall is fortified. So take heed of my words, and fight for your religion and gratify the Musseeh by fighting in his cause, and send a messenger on your part, and I will send with him a note containing the names of those I wish them to send to us.”

‘Upon this Wartabek the Armenian laughed, and said, “By my religion, the Arabs will not listen to this without taking hostages from us.”

‘Yukina replied angrily—“How your ideas are opposed to one another, and how weak are your hearts! If the Mussulmans ask hostages of us, we will choose the most wretched inhabitants of the city, and will clothe them with robes of honour and decorate them

<sup>1</sup> Ras el Ain had not yet fallen into the hands of the Muhamnadans, as will be shown later.

with the ornaments of our chiefs, and we will send them to them."

'Shariyad exclaimed, "I swear by the sacrament we will do exactly as Yukina has said."

'Then he commanded his followers and the patriarchs to prepare for the fight, and they obeyed him and armed themselves.

'And the next day all went forth, and when Abd Allah (Ibn Inān) saw them ready for battle, he commanded his own followers to mount their horses, and they went towards the gate of the trench which they had made for themselves, and met their enemies, crying, "O God, assist us against these people as you assisted us on the day of the battle of Ahzab, when we fought by the side of the Prophet!"

'Then Ibn Inān traversed their ranks and marshalled their squadrons and said to them, "I am going to the leader of these people and to their cross; follow me, O Mussulmans, and if God gives us the victory, and we pull down their cross, they will no longer stand before us."

'And they replied, "O Amīr, we swear by the God who knows all hearts, you have invited us to do what we will most willingly perform; so attack them, that we may support you."

'And Abd Allah advanced against Karkisha; and at the onset, the standard bearer of the Mussulmans—Sohail ibn Adi—was severely wounded; but they made good use of their swords against the enemies of God.

'And Abd Allah er Rahman ibn Malik il Ashkar met Wartabek the Armenian, and when he saw his cuirass

he knew that he was one of their chiefs, and he fell upon him, and pressed him so sore that he pierced his chest with a spear, the head of which came out between his shoulders.

‘And Inān ibn Mubarran (Mirwan) met Shariyad, who had nearly routed the army, and he attacked him, not knowing that he was the king, but taking him for one of the chiefs; and he fell upon him, calling out, “I am Naaman ibn Mubarran, the lion in war.”

‘And when Shariyad heard his name, and knew him to be the chief who had conquered Jerusalem, he turned and fled. But Naaman pursued him, crying, ‘Where will you fly from me, O thou enemy of God?’”

‘And overtaking him, he threw his spear through his body, the weapon coming out at the other side, and he fell down weltering in his blood.

‘And when the Christian army saw that their king was slain, they turned and fled, and took refuge in their city.

‘And the Queen Armanusab was greatly terrified, and she applied to Yukina for advice, saying, “O servant of the Musseeh, we have no one but you to uphold our rule and advise us.”

‘He replied, “O queen, I am your servant in everything.”

‘And she invested him and his followers with robes of honour, and appointed him commander-in-chief. And he turned to his followers and said, “You must know that this city is under my command, and the queen places her whole hopes in you; you must therefore fight in her cause.”

‘Then he stationed them on the fortifications, and he

set up large catapults on the side of the river Khabūr. And the people of the city took refuge themselves, and their women and children and their property, within certain walled precincts.

‘And the Mussulmans approached the city, and Yukina, who had placed his catapults on the fortifications, threw stones at them with great effect. And they continued every day to strengthen the place, and it was called the Burj el Arab (Arab’s tower).

‘But the Mussulmans pressed the people of Karkisha very hard. And the queen said to Yukina, “Where is the fulfilment of the promises you made to King Shariyad?”

‘And he replied, “I will keep my word.”

‘And then Yukina mounted the wall on the side of the Moslem soldiers, and cried, “O ye Arabs, the fight has continued a long time between us, so send me ten of your chiefs that we may determine what conditions we can agree upon between us until you succeed in conquering the king of Ras al Aïn, and after that we will submit, and ask from us whatever property you desire, for we are aware that if you once make a promise, you will keep it.”

‘And when Abd Allah Inān and Sohail and their followers saw him, they knew that he was plotting a stratagem against the people of the city. So Sohail called out—“O enemy of yourself, you have escaped from our hands, and returned to your first religion; where will you fly from us or get out of our reach? You have fallen into the cage, and we will take the town with the sword and cut off your head.”

‘He replied, “You cannot prevail against our city, because it is fortified, and full of brave men, and strength is with us in abundance; but send to us ten of your men in whose word you put trust, and whom I will name, in order that we may enter into a treaty with them, and if you conquer Ras al Aïn we will submit, and we will make a truce for the rest of the year, of which there are four months remaining.”

‘On this Abd Allah said, “I consent to what you propose. Who are the ten men you require?”

‘He then named them and said, “If you send any others, there will be no peace between us.”

‘And Abd Allah replied, “We will send the very men you ask for and no others; so come down and open the gates.”

‘Then he said to the queen, “The Moslem require hostages.”

‘She replied, “We will send those whom you mentioned of the rabble.”

‘He answered—“We must submit to necessity. The people of the city have leaders who despise your youth and your widowhood, and perhaps if they hear of our having made peace with the Arabs they may not consent to it, and send for assistance to Antalík, king of Bentuwi and Mosul, and to the Jerd and the lord of Ibikariyeh.”

‘She replied, “What do you think we ought to do?”

‘He said, “Send hostages from among them to the Arabs.”

‘Yukina did this that there should be no one to interfere with him in whatever he wished to do. The

queen having given her consent to the arrangement to send hostages of the leaders of the people, when they left the gates ten of the followers of the Prophet entered.

‘And these were located inside of the tower known as Burj el Manzar, and Yukina did this because much of the wealth and property of the city was in that tower.

‘And when they had entered, he returned to the queen and said—“I have placed them in the tower, and to-morrow we will put them on the top of the fortifications, and will say to the Arabs, ‘You will either go away or we will throw them over the parapets;’ and we will draw our swords upon them.”

‘And she replied, “How shall we do so, and they have our own hostages? They will retaliate upon them, and the friends of the hostages will rise against us, and our honour will be tarnished.”

‘And he answered, “If you are afraid of your people, make peace with the Moslems.”

‘She said, “Advise us to the best of your judgment.”

‘And he replied—‘To hear is to obey. I will now proceed to these ten men and hear what their chief has commanded them to say, and what it is they require of us to make peace.”

‘He then proceeded to the tower where the ten Moslems were, and informed them of his intention to surrender the place. And he said, “When you hear them shouting, fall upon the soldiers in the tower.”

‘He then gave them arms and a password. Then he returned to his followers, and placed them upon the ramparts, and left none of the Greeks with them.

‘And when it became dark, Yukina went to the Moslems, and warned them, and they drew their swords and attacked the people in the tower, making them feel the bitterness of death.

‘And when the people of Karkisha awoke next morning they found that the Moslems had taken possession of the city and overpowered them. And they endeavoured to run away to the great tower, but the Moslem fell upon them.

‘And the queen knew that the stratagem of Yukina had been attended with success, and she would not fight; but she summoned her troops and the people, and bade them cry “Al Ghaun, Al Ghaun” (that is to say, quarter, quarter).

‘And Abd Allah and Sohail gave them quarter. But their followers ransacked the city and took what property and treasure there was in it. And they set apart one-fifth for the public treasury, and divided the remainder among the Mussulmans.

‘And then they offered the religion of Islam to the inhabitants, sparing the lives of those who accepted it, and giving them a portion of the plunder, but those that refused they cut off their heads.

‘And those of the inhabitants of Karkisha who had turned Mussulmans assembled before Abd Allah and Sohail, and said to them, “Lo, we have accepted your religion, and we want our gardens and vineyards back again, for which we will pay you a tax, as we used to pay to the king before you.”

‘And Abd Allah replied—“The property is all in the hands of the Imāms, and does not belong to you any



more, for we have won it with our swords, and the land does not return to you in consequence of your conversion, for that was due to us as the price of your blood; and the trees of the land, and the vineyards and the tax thereon, and the Jarunīh (that is the ricks and threshing) all belong to the Imām. He will take therefrom that which he requires, and divide the rest among the Mussulmans."

'And the queen and her followers adopted the religion of Islam, and Abd Allah left them in their own homes, and provided liberally for them, in order that the people of the country should hear of it, and follow their example.

'And the taking of Karkisha was on the 1st of Ramadan, the year of the Hejreh 18 (October 6, A.D. 639), and the Moslem took possession of the great church of the city, which was called Bayāah Jūrjūs (or Church of St. George), and driving out the priests, they converted it into a mosque.

'And Abd Allah Inān appointed Sergīl ibn Ka'āb governor of the city, with fifty men.

'This accomplished, he proceeded to Maksīn, which place capitulated on payment of four thousand dinars of gold of Heraclea, and ten thousand dirhems, besides a thousand loads of wheat and barley and a hundred cloaks.

'After this he departed to Sakiyeh' (Sakiniyah of Forbes), 'which place he also spared for half the above amount, as also the people of Thamaniyah and Arayat (Arban).

'Then he proceeded to Majdal' (or Mijdal), 'and the

place having surrendered, he awaited there the commands of the Amīr Ayād ibn Ghanīm, who wrote to him—"I have received your letter, and have thanked God for the conquests which He has accorded to the Mussulmans, and for his mercy and generosity. Remain in your place till you hear further from me."

'And Saif ibn Sa'ad has related that when God gave the victory to Abd Allah Inān over the Khabūr, and that he had taken up his abode in Majdal, Kais ibn Abī Jazīm composed verses in honour of his subjection of the country.'

What were towns and cities on the Khabūr up to the time of the Muhammadan conquests, including Karkisha, Arban, Mijdal, and Ras al Aīn, are but poor villages in the present day.

The treacherous and ruthless conquests of the Saracens have been of little avail to the country, and under a decrepit Osmanli government they have sunk to the lowest ebb of poverty. If Christian or Kurd were in their turn to ravage Karkisha, they would find neither property nor wealth.

But under an orderly and protecting rule, the former prosperity of the valley of the Khabūr might easily be restored, and the rejoicings of health and wealth be heard upon its fertile banks.

## CHAPTER XV.

## REHOBOTH OF THE RIVER.

ON Friday, May 8, we left Karkisha, and continued the descent of the river through districts which a few graphic words from the pen of the Athenian historian have rendered familiar to all scholars :—

‘A plain throughout, as even as the sea, and full of wormwood; if any other kinds of shrubs or reeds grew there, they had all an aromatic smell, but no trees appeared. Of wild creatures, the most numerous were wild asses, and not a few ostriches, besides bustards and gazelles, which our horsemen sometimes chased.’

Ostriches have long since been exterminated in Mesopotamia, and wild asses (*Equus hemionus*) are very rare. It was with difficulty we obtained the skin of one from the Arabs. Layard, however, heard one characteristically braying from a jutting rock in the Sinjar.

Passing an olive grove designated as Zait (Zaitun of the Turks); we came to a bend in the river, in the centre of which is a goodly Arab town called Mayerthin. The fertile plain on which this town is situated was backed by a low range of cliffs, and the ruins of the castle of Rahabah stood forward upon a detached rock

in the midst of them. At the point where the same cliffs abutted upon the river some miles further down, were the more extensive ruins of Saladin's castle, now known as Salahiyah. We were in fact in what had been, if, as there seems to be little doubt from the character of its ruins as well as its name, that this was the site of Rehoboth on the River, so called to distinguish it from Rehoboth Ir or Ur, now Kalah Shirgat on the Tigris—and Salahiyah was also called Rahabah Malik—in the midst of an ancient centre of population, of which Mayerthin was the existing representative.

It was a beautiful, calm sunshiny afternoon when we arrived at this Arab town. The weather, the hitherto continually prosperous navigation, and the pleasant aspect of a goodly town lining the low level banks of the river, which were crowded by its inhabitants, their dusky faces lit up by wonder and curiosity, lent such a charm and novelty to the situation, and so raised our spirits, that Colonel Chesney ordered a gun or two to be fired, as a noisy salute to our friends, as the steamers took up their position alongside their sunny dwelling-houses.

So rapid had our progress been, and so swiftly had we been borne along from our last station, that I omitted to recognise the tumulus or mound erected by his soldiers to the memory of their murdered emperor Gordian. According to Ammianus, this tumulus was conspicuous for some distance on approaching Zaita, and although that site is placed by the historian of Julian at only sixty stadia from Kerkesium,<sup>1</sup> it would appear from its name to be the same as Zait, 'the olive

<sup>1</sup> Κιρκήσιον (Kirkesium), (Zozimus iii. xiii).

grove,' before noticed. Ptolemy, however, enumerates three, and the Theodosian Tables two sites, between Kirkesium and Zaita, which throw doubts upon the distance given by Ammianus, and Eutropius and Sextus Rufus both agree in placing the tumulus of Gordian at a distance of twenty Roman miles from the castle of Kirkesium.

Nor could I make out the site of Dura, which is described as being a deserted city in this neighbourhood in the time of Julian. The plain of Dura, on which Nebuchadnezzar erected the golden image, has been referred by Rawlinson to the site of the actual Imām Dur, which under the name of Beth-Suri was an episcopal see of the Syrians in Sassanian times, and the Rusa or Rura, which with its contained palace of Khusrau, was destroyed by Heraclius. But it is evident that there was also a Dura on the Euphrates, for Isidorus of Charax makes especial mention of such, as a city built by the Macedonians, and by them called Europus. Ptolemy does not notice Dura, but after Zaita places Bethauna, having the usual Syrian origin from Beth or Bēit, a place of abode or a town.<sup>1</sup>

Mayerthin could boast of about five hundred houses, chiefly disposed in a double line along the banks of the river. The level and well cultivated plain on which it was situated was formerly separated from the cliffs in the background by a canal, or, from the physical aspect of things, this may have been the ancient bed of the river, and afterwards a canal. Idrisi notices such a canal as being derived from the Euphrates at Rahabah, and which divided itself into various branches in the

<sup>1</sup> Appendices 14 and 15.

interior. Some have even supposed this canal to have extended hence to the Pallacopas in Babylonia. (‘Questions adressées à M. le Capitaine Chesney avant sa seconde exploration du cours de l’Euphrate.’ *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Paris*.) But this mistake appears to have arisen from confounding what the Oriental geographer says of the division of the canal at Rahabah into several branches, with what he says immediately afterwards, as to the different canals flowing from the Euphrates. The cliffs above Rahabah which extend thence to the banks of the river at Salahiyah constitute a physical impossibility to a southerly prolongation of this canal. But as Rehoboth is described as being *on the river*, this canal may have constituted the ancient bed of the river. The disposition of the cliffs in a kind of semi-circle also favoured this view of the case.

We hastened, soon after we arrived at Mayerthin, across well irrigated fields to the said castle of Rahabah. We found it to be a Saracenic ruin of no very great extent, but built of more ancient materials. Among these were a great number of bricks, the surface of which was covered with vitrified bitumen converted into green slag, similar to what are met with in many other Assyrian ruins. These bricks also occurred in the mound on which the castle is built. The tradition of the natives is, as usual, that it was originally founded by Nimrod.

The relation of the name of Rahabah to that of Rehoboth, described in Genesis xxxvi. 37 as being by the river Euphrates, the existence of Assyrian ruins at

the same place, and the tradition of its being one of Nimrod's cities, all tend to identify this site with that of one of the eight primeval cities of the world. The same tradition is preserved of almost all the cities of Asshur, of their origin from the mighty hunter.

Keil and Delitzsch both agree that Rehoboth on the river must be distinguished from the Idumæan Robotha or Er Ruheibeh in the Wady running towards El Arish, as it is also quite distinct from Rehoboth Ir or Ur in Assyria, and called the 'Ur of the Persians' from its neighbouring bitumen springs.

Rauwolf, who travelled in the time of Queen Elizabeth, described it as 'a pretty large town of the kingdom of Arabia, which lies in a beautiful and fertile district about half a (German) mile from the water.' Balbi, the Venetian traveller, only found in the same place in 1579 the vestiges of an ancient town, having but a few inhabitants dispersed among the ruins. It was also at one time a Christian episcopacy, and is enumerated as such, and it appears from El Wakedi that it fell into the hands of the Muhammadans before Karkisha.

El Wakedi relates as follows. 'The governor of the town was at that time a patriarch of the Christians, named Yahna, and he was subject to Shariyad ibn Farinun, the Christian king of Mesopotamia. And when the people saw that their chief had no means of successfully resisting the Muhammadans, they sent a deputation to him, saying: "Ye are between the people of Irak (Khaldæa) and Syria, and what have you to do with the quarrels of these people?"

‘So they sent to Ayad, and proffered submission, and Sohail ibn Adi was deputed on the part of the Saracens to dictate terms, while Ayad himself proceeded onwards to subject Rakka.’

Rahabah, or Rehoboth Hannahar, or ‘of the river,’ was called after the Mussulman conquest Rahabah al Hamra, or ‘the red,’ by the Arabian geographers and historians, to distinguish it from Rahabah al Malik ben Tauk, according to Abû-l-fada, so called from having been built by one Malik ben Tauk, in the time of the Khalif El Mamun (now Salahiyah).

The distinctive appellation of ‘the red’ was given to old Rahabah from its having been constructed in part with a very hard red or flesh-coloured breccia, which lies on the top of the cliffs of sandstone, marls, and gypsum which encompass the plain of Mayerthin. (See ‘Res. in Assyria &c.,’ p. 74.)

The existence of two sites of proximately the same name, in the same neighbourhood, has caused some confusion among geographers and commentators. Thus Rosenmüller, speaking of Rehoboth on the river, says: ‘It is probably identical with the town called by the Arabian writers Racabath Malik ibn Tauk.’ Bochart identifies in one place (Phaleg, 38), Rehoboth on the river with Rahabah Malik; but he afterwards (p. 289) seeks for it at Birtha.

When Benjamin of Tudela, being at that time at Mosul, says: ‘It is three days hence to Rahabah, which is Rehoboth *by the River Euphrates*, and contains about two thousand Jews, the principal of whom are Rabbi Ezekiah, R. Ehud, and R. Isaac. The city is surrounded



by a wall, it is very handsome, large, and well fortified, and the environs abound in gardens and orchards,' he evidently meant Rehoboth *on the Tigris*, Rehoboth Ir or Ur, 'fire,' and according to Ammianus called the Ur of the Persians from the neighbouring bitumen fountains. It is impossible to cross Mesopotamia to the Euphrates in three days, but the distance given by Benjamin of Tudela is that of Kalah Shirgat from Mosul.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## SALADIN'S CASTLE.

WE left Mayerthin on Friday, May 20. The country was more diversified than heretofore. The plains or marshes, and the woods of tamarisk, were enlivened by occasional Arab forts or villages, and the sepulchral chapels of their sheikhs or holy men were always placed in some prominent or picturesque situation.

Low hills of uniform outline stretched along the horizon on the Mesopotamian side, while on the Syrian, the hills approached the river at several points; and at a place called Al Ashar the steamers had to make a very abrupt turn past a cliff which is noticed by Rauwolf as the 'Carteron mountain.'

At midday the steamers brought to for fuel at a most delightful and picturesque spot. The Mesopotamian side was pleasingly shaded by woods of poplar and tamarisk, but on the Syrian side the river was fronted by a lofty bold and perpendicular cliff, about two hundred feet in height, and insulated to the north by a deep wooded ravine, while to the south it descended more gradually to the level of the river banks. The summit of this peninsulated cliff was occupied by the ruins of a castellated building which was at once seen

to be the acropolis or citadel of more extensive fortifications.

I must not omit to mention that the cliffs at Al Ashar were so named from a ruined tower still standing at the spot; and that immediately below this point, and on the Mesopotamian side, was a rather remarkable mound of debris called Hijanik.

Most rivers of the extent and magnitude of the Euphrates have some forms of animal life peculiar to themselves. Some their hippopotami, their crocodiles, or alligators—others, as in South America, their river porpoises and manati or sea-cows. As yet the Euphrates had only presented us with two remarkable typical representatives, the large and fierce trionyx or turtle, and the gigantic lizards or monitors; but we were destined to be charmed at this spot (and at this spot only), by the presence of a beautiful and elegant little bird, a tern or sea-swallow, which building in the cliffs above, now congregated in numbers at the bows of the steamer, or flitted about, imparting life and animation to scenery which it must be admitted was, from the general absence of animal life, dull and dreary enough.

This pretty bird was six inches in length from bill to tail, and twenty-three inches in extent of wings. The head, neck, back and belly feathers were jet black; the inner and upper wing coverts black; upper and outer scapular and humeral portions of the wings, pure white; the lower wing coverts and lower dorsal regions, ashy-blue; the bill flesh-coloured; the legs orange-red. In the young birds the belly was spotted and the wing coverts were grey.

There is a species of tern common to Western Asia, known as the *Sterna caspica*, which is not only met with on the Caspian Sea, but also on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and is abundant on the coast of Palestine at certain seasons of the year. Hence it is noticed in Holy Writ under the name of Salach (Lev. xi. 17 ; Deut. xiv. 17).

But this bird is nearly two feet in length, of the weight of a pigeon, and, with a black head, has a white and grey body. There is also a tern said to be peculiar to the Nile, but Colonel Hamilton Smith is of opinion that the *Sterna nilotica* is the young of the *Sterna caspica*, which is, however, very doubtful, for birds do not remain always young. At all events it is a light-coloured bird, not like the black and white tern of the Euphrates. No doubt when naturalists come to know the latter, they will designate it the *Sterna euphratica*.

Whilst the men were busy cutting wood for fuel, Colonel Chesney, Murphy, and myself started to explore the ruins at the top of the cliff on the opposite side of the river.

These were found to be very extensive, in that respect as well as in preservation utterly different from anything remaining at Rahabah Hamra, and embracing a very wide area ; stretching indeed from the top of the cliff, as on a platform, with a very gentle slope far into the desert beyond. This vast area was almost entirely enclosed within walls, still standing, as were also the gateways. The walls were flanked by towers, and also defended by massive forts, and the gateway by which we entered the precincts was a richly decorated specimen

of Saracenic architecture. The citadel, which occupied the top of the cliff, was also an extensive building, but there were no remains of houses or public buildings beyond these, and the utter desolation of the interior tallied well with that of the surrounding country, to which, if possible, an additional sense of cheerlessness was imparted by the tenantless aspect of these ruins.

It is manifest by the character of the ruins that Rahabah el Malik ben Tauk, reported by the Arabian historians to have been built by a Malik or king of that name, in the time of the Khalif El Mamun, owes its existence to the rise of the Muhammadan power, or rather to when it was at its apogee. It has no claims to existence save as a fortress on the way to Palestine by Palmyra, or to defend Central and Lower Euphrates from the approach of an enemy from the west. Hence have the inhabitants returned to the more fertile plain of Rahabah Hamra, the ancient Rehoboth-an-nahar, or 'on the river.'

It is evident also from its actual name Salahiyah, also the name of one of Salah-ū-dīn's castles near Damascus, that when, in later times, the Crusaders came to rescue the land of the Cross from the followers of a false prophet, Salah-ū-dīn, 'the refuge or safety of religion,' or 'defender of the faith,' as Yūsuf or Joseph, the son of Ayūb, the Kurdish ruler of Mosul, became afterwards designated, made this place one of his strongholds.

It is remarkable that this chieftain, who became the bulwark of Muhammadanism, at a time when it was most threatened by the hostility of the Christians, who

was the greatest terror of the crusaders, and whose name, euphonised into Saladin, belongs as much to poetry and romance almost as history, has left few monuments behind to commemorate his power and prosperity.

It was a part of that character which he assumed when his talents and energy had established him as 'defender of the faith,' and in which he was throughout as consistent as he was in that humanity and chivalrous moderation which has earned to him the applause of historians, that he never allowed himself to be dazzled by his great elevation and successes ; his garments were of coarse woollen, his drink water, and he uniformly discountenanced all pomp and vanity.

Hence his works were consecrated to public use. Cairo was fortified with a wall and citadel, and mosques, colleges, and hospitals were endowed in almost every city in Arabia and Syria ; but for himself he never built a palace or a castle.

At the present day, a hall with noble monolith columns of red granite (not of his erection), some rude granaries, and a solitary wall, still preserve his memory in Misr el Kahira—a fort on the confines of the desert celebrated in the annals of French occupation—a suburb of Damascus, and the ruins of a place founded by the Khalifs, and now first resuscitated from oblivion, are among the few reminiscences of the noble Saracen.

The ruins now before us, probably strengthened and embellished by the great chieftain, formed indeed, in their utter desolation, a most fitting monument to that self-denying warrior who commanded at his death

that no solemnities should be observed, but that his shirt should be made fast to the point of a lance, and carried before his dead body as an ensign, while the public crier announced to the people that 'Salah-u-din, conqueror of the East, of all the greatness and riches he had in his life, carrieth not with him after his death anything more than his shirt.'

'A sight,' says an old historian, 'worthie so great a king, which wanted nothing to his eternall commendation more than the true knowledge of his salvation in Christ Jesus.'

We know from Schultens, to whom we are indebted for a translation of the 'Life of Saladin,' written by that chieftain's friend and minister, the Kadi Buhadin, that the Ayubites were descended from the Kurd tribe of Rawandiz (Rawadaei) the same as the Oroutes of Pliny, and whose chief occupies in the present day one of the most impregnable fortresses in Kurdistan.

The name of the tribe is, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, a corruption of the pure old Persian root *Erwend*, 'a pass,' the *Derbend* of the Turks, and which is usually Hellenised into *Orodes* and *Orontes*. Their stronghold in the mountains has hitherto been visited, as far as I know, by only two Europeans—Dr. Ross and myself.

By virtue of his descent, Saladin was a follower of that latitudinarian doctrine of the so-called *Ali Ilahis*, who like the *Seiks* admit the spiritualisation, and possible incarnation, of almost every good and pious or virtuous person. Gibbon admits in a passing note, that the Ayubites were infected with a heresy which he con-

founds with metempsychosis; and hence he says the orthodox sultans insinuated that their descent was only on the maternal side, and that their ancestor was a stranger who settled among the Kurds.

This is a great admission from one who immediately afterwards derides Vertot for adopting what he terms the foolish notion of the indifference of Saladin.

The religious dogmas which the hero had imbibed as a birthright constitute, in fact, the most singular doctrine extant in the East. It is an acknowledged remnant of Judaism, strangely amalgamated with Sabæan, Christian, Muhammadan, and more recent legends and traditions.

The Ali Ilahîs believe in a series of successive incarnations of the Godhead, one of which is always in existence, like the Lama of Thibet. Moses, Benjamin, David, Elias, Jesus Christ, Muhammad, Ali and his tutor Salman—a joint development—the Imāms Husaîn and Hasan, and the Haft-tan (seven pirs or saints), are considered with (the last, but not present incarnation) the Baba Yadgar, the chief of these incarnations.

Among these are selected as greater than others, Khadr or Khidr Iliyas, ‘the evergreen Elias,’ from whom and Ali they derive their name, and who being translated without suffering the pangs of death, and according to the Christian doctrine being appointed to come again before the great and terrible day of the Lord, is still by the Ilahîs considered to wander in the world.

Rich, in his ‘Narrative of a Residence in Kurdistan’ (vol. i. p. 141), relates his having met with a durwiz or dervish, and a holy follower of the sect, who averred



to his having met and conversed with the prophet Elias or .Elijah.

The next in importance is Ali, the prophet of the Shi'ahs or Persians, and whose children, Abbas Ali, and the Imāms Husaīn and Hasan, are joint successors of the incarnation of the Divine Spirit. The third is the existing incarnation for the time being, and one of the last of whom was induced by Colonel Taylor, the late Resident at Baghdad, and who was well versed in Oriental legends and traditions, to pay a visit to the Residency.

The whole of these incarnations then, being simply those of the 'Spirit of God,' are looked upon as one and the same person, the bodily form of the Divine manifestation being alone changed; but there are different degrees of perfection of development admitted, the most perfect having presented themselves in the persons of Benjamin, David, Elias, and Ali.

Sepulchral chapels, objects of devout pilgrimage, and dedicated to successive incarnations, are now known to most travellers in the East, and they constitute some of the most remarkable modern monuments in Kurdistan and the countries adjacent. In Asia Minor they are met with at Angora, at Yaprakli, at Kifri on the Tigris, and at numerous other places; but it must be admitted that these are sometimes looked upon as resting-places of the wandering Elias, or of the spirit of Elias, rather than as tombs. It has even been said that Iliyas is a name given to a Turkish saint and hero, confounded by the Turks with St. George and the prophet Elias. (The Rev. Mr. Renouard, in 'Journ. of Roy. Geo. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 273.)

The so-called 'false Messiah,' Daniel Elroi, whose story has been so eloquently told by a late eminent statesman, was one of these incarnations, introduced in a peculiar form into our literature, and he appears to have emanated from Amaria, a town of Kurdistan, near Holwan.

The latitudinarianism of such a belief as we have endeavoured to render intelligible, from the circumstance of its being almost unknown in this country, where it is taken for granted that every Sunni is a follower of Muhammad and every Shi'ah a follower of Ali, and there cannot be a greater mistake, attest, however, to the little sincerity of Saladin, when for political purposes, and as the defender of the faith, he pretended to Muhammadan exclusiveness and bigotry.

The very fact of his extreme religious ostentation, reading the Kuran between contending armies, and his pretended hostility to a knowledge which as an Ali Ilahî he could not despise, manifest the hypocrisy of his purpose, if the general tenor of his conduct had not left scarcely a doubt upon the subject.

Foremost in this point of view we may place his assumption of Christian knighthood; his compassion towards the supposed enemies of his faith, his courtesies with Richard Cœur de Lion, and his clemency at the capture of Jerusalem. Then again, there were the frequent marriages which took place between Kurds and Christian maids; the negotiation entered into in regard to Richard's sister and the Malik Adhel, a story woven into a romance by Madame Cottin, but preserved as a tradition of descent by the Babbah princes of Sulaimani-

yeh, and finally the equal distribution of alms upon his death among the three religious communities—Christian, Muhammadan, and Shi'ah—all sufficiently attest that Saladin lived and died in the wide-embracing and tolerant spirit of the religion of his forefathers.

Just as we were about to quit these desolate ruins, and were stopping to watch a lone Tartarian wolf stealing away in the distance, our attention was attracted by the appearance of a point in the far off horizon, which gradually assumed the proportions of two objects moving on the level arid plain, and we examined them curiously from the walls as they loomed into our sight as mounted Arabs.

Scott says of the Highlander :

Scarce to be known by curious eye  
From the dark heather where they lie,  
So well was matched the tartan screen  
With heath-bell dark and bracken green.

But still, far more in harmony with the red-brown wilderness in which they were framed, were these sunny rovers of the desert. Their long brown camel-hair cloaks, the dusty sun-burnt kerchiefs which enveloped head, face, and neck, and the bay-coloured, neat-limbed steeds, almost identified themselves with the stubborn and flowerless shrubs and the time-worn rocks of the plain itself. The tasselled spear first proclaimed in the distance the real character of such specks on the monotonous waste.

These horsemen had been perceived at intervals following us many days, and they continued to follow us still more, and various conjectures were hazarded

as to the object of their persevering travels—some said curiosity, others opined that they were spies; but they seemed from what occurred subsequently to be waiting for that storm which they anticipated would engulf us all in the depths of the ‘great river.’

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE LOSS OF THE 'TIGRIS.'

THE morning of Saturday, May 21, opened with splendid and cheering sunshine. The river was wide and deep, unimpeded by islands or shoals, and with the exception of a ridge of rocks, known to the Arabs as the Hadjar-i-Jeriya, no obstacles presented themselves to an apparently safe and easy progress.

About four or five miles above the rocks, and at half-past ten in the morning, the steamers came to alongside the left bank of the river, to barter for some dry wood which the Arabs were only too glad to part with for a consideration.

An extensive plain of low grassy lands stretched beyond, on the Mesopotamian side, to where a low range of rocky hills came down to the river side. This headland was known to the Arabs as that of Irzah or Ezra.

The river itself took a south-westerly bend round the plain, turning south-eastwards to the white cliffs of gypsum and marls, whilst the plain itself was detached from the hills by a canal, called by the Arabs Musah, and as it corresponds to the Masca of Xenophon, it must be of great antiquity.

The historian of the 'Anabasis' also notices a site

called Corsote as being situated on the plain, and as being even in his time a deserted city. There were no remains of such a site visible in the present day, although some fragmentary remains of hewn stones were to be met with among the fallen rocks at the foot of the cliffs of Irzah—also called Al Wurdi by the Arabs.

The name of Irzah or Ezra, handed down by tradition, appears to claim for this ancient site some importance in the Jewish annals. There are indeed many probabilities that this was one of the numerous places to which, like Tel Mellah, Tel Harsa, Sura, &c., the Israelites were led during their Captivity.

It was one of those lonely yet lovely spots in the wilderness, where the beautiful daughters of Israel, hanging their unstrung harps upon the boughs of the white poplars—or as the poets will have it, the Babylonian or weeping willows—and refusing their haughty victors' command :

To sing the Lord's song in a strange clime,  
And chant the holy hymn to heathen ears ;  
Down by Euphrates' side they sat and wept  
In sorrow mute, but not to memory dead—

to use the version given of the incident by the late Lord Wellesley.

The place appears indeed to have retained the name of their great leader, who, favoured by the mission from Artaxerxes, collected, on the river Ahava or Masca, the offerings of the captive tribes, to complete the building of the temple commenced under Cyrus ; and who proclaimed a fast at the same place, to ensure a right way and a safe one, across the great desert that lay between

them and Jerusalem. It still remains an open question if the Ahava was not another name for the Chebar, but as this was pre-eminently the river of the second Captivity, it is not likely that it would be alluded to under another name. It is more likely that the Ahava was the Masca of Xenophon.

The great bend made by the river at this point is noticed by Balbi, who descended the stream in 1579, as keeping him from morning to noon in sight of the ruins. Rauwolf also describes the island as occupying more than half a day to encompass it.

But when Balbi speaks of these ruins as of greater extent than the city of Cairo, as always in sight from morning to noon, presenting nothing to view but portions of massive walls and lofty towers, there can be no doubt that, as Mignan mistook the curious red sandstones at Ahwaz for ruins, and de Saulcy the basalts near Capernaum for similar relics, so Balbi mistook the jagged and broken masses of gypsum for the fragments of an endless city. The reader will remember that an isolated white mass of the same description once took Colonel Chesney and myself on a wildgoose chase that nearly proved to have had a tragical ending.

The Macedonians, we have before seen, had a town between the Khabūr and Anah under the name of Dura. Zozimus places it close to the Zaita or olive grove where was the tumulus of Gordian, but Cellarius remarks upon the improbability of the situation. Isidorus of Charax calls it the city of Nicanor, built by the Macedonians, and also called by the Greeks Europus. Polybius, however (v. 49), notices Europus and Dura as

distinct sites. It appears to have been a goodly city, although deserted in the time of Julian, and it is stated of it that '*olim bene culta fuit.*' This may from the antiquity and advantages of the position have been the site; but there is also an Imām Dūr on the Mesopotamian side, between the Khabūr and Anah.

At half-past one, P.M., the loading of the wood being completed, and the men having dined, the two steamers left the bank together, and proceeded down the river; the 'Tigris,' on board of which Colonel Chesney had for a few days past taken up his home, leading the way about a hundred and fifty yards ahead.

The wind was blowing gently from the south-east, or up the river, and against us, but only sufficiently so as to ripple the water.

After proceeding a short distance, a dark mass of cloud was observed in the horizon to the west-south-west; but as the sky had been much overcast in that direction for the last few days, the appearance was not at first considered to be important. The cloud, however, continued to advance rapidly towards us, and it was seen to cling to the land, or, as it were, to breast the surface of the desert. The awnings of both vessels were immediately furled, anchors were got in readiness, and all preparations made for meeting what was evidently a portentous storm.

As the cloud neared us, the sky assumed an appearance such as we had never before witnessed, and which was awful and terrific in the extreme. A dense black arch enveloped the whole of the horizon, and the space beneath the arch was filled up with a body of dust, of



a brownish orange colour, whirling round, and at the same time advancing towards us with fearful rapidity.

Colonel Chesney being on board the 'Tigris,' she was now the flag-ship, and a signal was made to secure to the banks as quickly as possible, and at the same time we perceived that the 'Tigris' itself was rounding to make for the left bank. The 'Euphrates' followed in the wake, as nearly as possible.

At this moment the hurricane came on us—a warm dry wind, laden with the fragrance of the aromatic plants of the wilderness, followed in a few instants by a tremendous blast of wind, with some rain in large drops. The crash broke upon us like heaven's own artillery, and the hurricane seemed as if bent upon hurling both steamers at once to the bottom of the foaming river.

At the same time the 'Tigris' struck the bank, and two of her crew sprang on shore with a hawser to make her fast; but being thrown back by the recoil, the wind caught her starboard, or the wrong side of her bows, and not only drove her off with great violence, but also caused her to drift down upon the Euphrates, so that both vessels would have inevitably come into collision had not Cleveland, with admirable promptitude, backed the paddles, at the risk of losing command of the steerage of his own vessel.

Providentially, the 'Tigris,' leaving the two men ashore (luckily for them), passed clear before the 'Euphrates' had even quite lost her head-way, so that the paddles of the latter being again turned ahead, she gained the bank with some difficulty, but happily without recoil.

In a moment Charlewood was on shore, followed by several men bearing a light anchor and hawser, and in a few seconds another anchor and chain-cable; holes were hastily dug to make them fast, the engines being kept going all the time at their full power to head the blast, and the steamer was thus soon made secure.

All the time that this was going on, I stood upon the after-deck watching the course of events, and it required all the strength I possessed to hold on by the bulwarks of the ship.

The 'Tigris,' after being blown from the bank, made every effort to regain her position by putting full power on her engines, and endeavouring to bring her bows round to the current; an anchor was let go, but the heel of the ship was too great to allow of another being got out.

A little lower down the river, having got into about mid-stream, another and a determined effort was made to bring her round, but in vain. To go along with the stream was impossible, as in the almost total darkness the windings of the river could not be seen, and she must have run right ashore. The wind in the mean time, which was tearing the boards from off the paddle-boxes like shreds of paper, making it impossible to stand without holding by something, drove her upon her broadside, so that the engines became powerless, while the waves, rising to the height of four or five feet, dashed in through the windows. Every one made attempts, but ineffectually, to keep out the water, and two native servants continued so employed till they perished.

The fate of the vessel was soon decided. She began

to fill fast, and every one came on deck with the exception of the engineer, who stood to his post until the water was knee deep, and the two natives previously mentioned.

The fore part of the deck was under water when Captain Lynch went to report to the Colonel that the vessel was sinking. The word was then passed for everyone to save himself. At this instant a momentary gleam of light faintly disclosed the banks on the left side, at a distance of some twenty to thirty yards; and as there seemed every probability that the stern would come in contact with it before she went down, the people were encouraged to remain steady until they touched the land.

The officers and crew had continued perfectly cool and collected throughout. Orders were given and obeyed without the slightest confusion; not a word was spoken, not a murmur heard. As the steamer began to sink first forward, the men moved gradually aft, some clinging to the rigging, but the majority grouping together near the tiller—a circumstance which probably added to the loss of life, as in the water they would get hold of one another.

The ill-fated vessel and her crew did not remain long the sport of the waves. All at once she sank, casting thirty-four brave men upon the flood, to struggle against a furious wind and a strong current, with an atmosphere so charged with dust and spray, that it was almost as dark as night. Indeed, so awfully indistinct was the whole scene that, although there was but a short distance between the two steamers, the memory of that

ship thus sinking so suddenly beneath the waves appears as a dream or an illusion.

Captain Lynch had not left the ship till there were several feet of water on the deck, when he dived from beneath the starboard ridge-rope, and Colonel Chesney got clear in the same manner through the larboard side, but luckily took a direction which brought him to the bank.

The 'Tigris' remained for a moment with the keel at her stern uppermost; but having gone down bow foremost, she struck the bottom in that position, and turned round as upon a pivot, for she was afterwards found lying in the bed of the river completely upset.

It was probably in part owing to this circumstance, added to the crowding of the men at the stern, that so heavy a fatality accompanied the loss of the vessel, for it went down close to the bank, while the wind was driving everything in the same direction; and with one exception, most of the men were good swimmers. Even the survivors themselves were totally unable to account satisfactorily for the loss of twenty of our devoted men out of the thirty-four on board. Being for the most part huddled together, many in the darkness may have grasped each other, so as to have prevented the free use of their limbs; it is possible that some took a wrong direction, and swam out into the middle of the river, and it is probable also that others were involved in the whirlpool occasioned by the sudden sinking of the vessel, and its turning a somersault.

In the mean time the 'Euphrates' had been secured to the bank; but as the waves were still dashing through

the ports with great violence, fears were entertained that she might, notwithstanding the precautions taken, sink alongside the bank; and if the storm had lasted, in all probability this would have been the case. But the Almighty mercifully ordained it otherwise; and, the wind having suddenly abated, the 'Euphrates' still floated, whilst the sun shone with mocking light over the spot where her consort and her crew had been, dispelling at the same moment the hurricane mist, and lifting the veil from the work of destruction.

Scarcely was the 'Euphrates' out of danger, than Lieutenant Murphy and myself, after hastily arming ourselves, hurried down the banks of the river, for we could see that the Arabs were hastening to the scene of disaster, and with what intention could be only too readily surmised. We had not gone far, however, when we found to our vexation that the river Masca intervened between us and the scene of the catastrophe. There was no alternative but to take to the water, and no time to take off our clothes, so swimming with one hand, and holding up our fowling-pieces with the other, we managed to get across; but the waters were very deep, the current strong, and the banks rather high, and without a footing; so that Murphy, who was not as practised a swimmer as I was, nearly came to grief. As it was, he had to give up his fowling piece to save his life, and I was glad on reaching the opposite bank to cling to a bush to drag myself out of the deep channel. Whilst we were thus involved in trouble, Charlewood had launched a boat, and steering it himself, got down to the rescue before us.

Those who had succeeded in gaining the shore, fourteen in number, were washed over the bank into a field of corn. Colonel Chesney was of the number ; and the happy circumstance of our gallant leader having been spared to us, gave us the only ray of joy that could brighten such a melancholy scene. It was indeed a touching sight to see these half-drowned officers and men scattered upon the field, their clothes drenched and clinging to their bodies, some partly uncovered, for they had divested themselves of superfluous garments before they took to the water, their hair lank and dishevelled, and their faces pale and horror-stricken. Except Lynch, who had to be supported, and Chesney, who struggled away in advance, most of the others fell mechanically into pairs, and walked holding each other by the hand, thus forming a kind of procession which all on board the 'Euphrates' received with a silent but deep-felt sympathy.

Among those who were lost none were more deeply regretted than Lieutenant Cockburn, a most amiable and promising young officer of the Royal Artillery, who had always looked kindly after the men who belonged to his branch of the service, and Lieutenant Lynch, Captain Lynch's brother, who was going to join his regiment in India.

We could not at the first moment admit to ourselves the extent of our losses or the reality of the catastrophe that had befallen us. Vain hopes were indulged in, that some had been carried lower down the stream, or that others might have swam to the opposite bank. Close and anxious search was therefore made among

the reeds and jungle on both sides of the river, and steps were taken at the same time to save any stores that might be found scattered along the banks.

Not only had the wood of the paddle-boxes and other wreck been cast upon the bank, but several cases of Birmingham and Sheffield goods, including guns and pistols, intended for presents, as also two casks of salt meat, nearly two hundred-weight each, had actually been blown ashore by the force of the wind. How this could have happened when the vessel turned over would be difficult to explain, unless they were on the deck. Amongst other things that were found was Colonel Chesney's Bible, to which great interest attached itself, as it had already gone to the bottom of the river when the Colonel was first navigating the river on a raft, and had been washed ashore in a similar manner.

The exact position of the lost vessel could not at first be discovered ; and we remained four days, partly at the scene of the catastrophe, and partly a little below, and not far from the cliffs of Irzah, sounding for the steamer, picking up what stores could be found, and looking out for the remains of our companions.

The conduct of the Arabs was most praiseworthy throughout. They crowded around in considerable numbers, and assisted us in collecting the scattered objects. With the exception of one man who tried to make off with a bag, which he was compelled by his countrymen to relinquish, they did not attempt to pilfer a single article. This abstention on their part was attributed to our having honourably paid them for their wood in the morning—an act of consideration on our

part which they would not have met with from a Turkish vessel placed in the same position.

The second day of our detention, a report was brought that the Arabs had found a body. It proved to be that of Yusuf Sáada, the interpreter. His hands were firmly clenched, and his countenance still indicated the fierce struggle he had made for his life. We buried him the same afternoon.

The next day Thomson, one of the survivors of the wreck, and myself had gone out to shoot rock partridges, which abounded at the foot of the cliffs, when we found another body in an inlet that came in at the extremity of the hills. It lay on its back, with only the face above the water, and upon which a vulture had fixed itself, and had so disfigured it as to be no longer recognisable.

We had at this time several thunderstorms. One on the evening of the 23rd was accompanied by very vivid lightning and a fall of large hailstones, one of which measured an inch and a half in every direction, and weighed 128 grains. But we had no repetition of the simoom of the desert.

These hurricanes appear to be peculiar to great level tracts and desert spaces, from their being exposed to changes which acting upon an extensive uniform surface, unbroken by forests or mountains, accumulate with an intensity that causes them to burst over some fated spot with fearful energy and destructiveness. For the same reason, they only last a brief time, discharging almost at once their pent-up electric tension, and at the same time re-establishing an equilibrium of elasticity and pressure with the atmosphere around.



Since the sad occurrence here related, I have had many opportunities of observing the same phenomena. The days on which they occurred were generally calm and sultry. A dense dark bank would come on steadily, the line of base being almost as distinct as a wall. The wind indeed appeared to blow strongest at the base, which was always in advance of the higher clouds, and of an orange or red, or sometimes fiery-red colour, occasioned by the refraction of the sun's rays from behind through the sand. The intensity of this refraction therefore varies with the sun's inclination, or the time of day when the hurricane comes on.

The almost resistless impetuosity of the storms, and their whirling character, not only cause them to tear up the plants and shrubs of the wilderness, but they even carry sheep off their legs if taken unawares. These animals, however, generally meet the hurricane with their legs drawn up and their noses to the ground.

The Arabs, if on horseback, bid their steeds lie on the ground, and they themselves seek shelter by the side of their bellies; or if on foot, they lie close to the ground during the prevalence of the blast, which they call by various names, as *fatulah*, and *samm*, whence our *simoom*. During its prevalence the sky is often cloudless above, and there is very little rain. Hence, as in our case, the sun broke forth brilliantly the moment the storm had gone by. I have watched the progress of one of these hurricanes from a housetop at Mosul, whence I had an extended view of Nineveh and of the Assyrian plain beyond, as far as to the mountains of Kurdistan, and for a short time the whole town was

enveloped in darkness. When a hurricane of this description comes upon a town, the natives announce its approach by loud shouts from the housetops.

Ammianus relates, in his account of Julian's descent of the river in boats, that when he was at Anatho (Anah, and our next station), there occurred 'a terrible event; whirlwinds which blew down the houses and tents, overthrew the soldiers, and caused many boats to sink.'

Josephus writes, upon more questionable authority, that of a Sibyl, that it was by a similar phenomenon, viz. that of an impetuous wind or violent hurricane, that the tower of Babel was thrown to the ground.

## CHAPTER XVIII

ANAH AND ANATHO.

WE remained at this scene of our first and greatest misfortune till the morning of Thursday, May 26, when we once more started on our way down the river; but alas! this time alone—leaving the ‘Tigris’ at the bottom of the Euphrates.

From Irza the river flowed onwards through an undulating country; but the hills, chiefly composed of gypsum and marls, covered with a gravelly deposit, were low and rounded, and there was very little wood.

The first point of interest we arrived at were the mounds of debris at Al Kayim, the site of the Agamna of Ptolemy, and although now a mere village, a place of some importance as the spot at which the caravans from Southern Syria and Palestine to Baghdad and Persia first touch the river Euphrates.

From this circumstance, we have no longer, from this station, only the meagre and oftentimes vague notices of Rauwolf, the adventurous merchant of Elizabethan time, or of Balbi, the Venetian who travelled in 1580, to assist us in establishing occasional links between actual times and those remote periods.

The Portuguese traveller Pedro Teixeira, or Texeira, ascended the Euphrates from Basra to this point in the early part of the seventeenth century, and from the same spot we have also the notes of the more able travellers, Tavernier, Thevenot, and Olivier. Lastly, it was here our gallant commander, then Captain Chesney, first reached the banks of the Euphrates, and it was from hence, that trusting himself on its waters on a frail raft, he first navigated the river, and was struck, on his adventurous descent, with the ideas of the commercial and political advantages of this great river, which as they first suggested themselves to British enterprise in the time of Elizabeth—times ever memorable in the annals of discovery—so was it vainly hoped that patriotic energy and enterprise would, with the improved means of transport afforded by the iron horse, have been carried out to their fullest extent in the days of Queen Victoria.

Until the present navigation and survey, the materials, however, collected by previous travellers were of little use, either for purposes of geography or history, and still less so as pointing—not what obstacles, but what facilities—the rock formations and the configuration of the country present for establishing railway communication, and restoring life and prosperity to lands once the cradle of mankind.

Gibbon complains bitterly, when endeavouring to follow the marches of the Romans through these countries, that both Pietro della Valle and Tavernier were ignorant of the old name and condition of Anah. ‘Our blind travellers,’ he says, ‘seldom possess any

previous knowledge of the countries which they visit. Shaw and Tournefort deserve an honourable exception.'

Certainly, if we are to judge of the accuracy of the descriptions of previous travellers by the idea which Gibbon by their perusal formed to himself of this very town, the renowned Anah<sup>1</sup> or Anatho of old, and the most picturesque and delightful town on the Euphrates, the opinion of their graphic powers will be very low indeed.

'The city of Annah or Anatho,' he says, 'the residence of an Arabian emir, is composed of *two* long streets, which enclose within a natural fortification a small island in the midst, and two fruitful spots on either side of the Euphrates.'

If it were possible to give a more unsatisfactory description, D'Anville, in his 'Euphrate et Tigre' (p. 62), would have achieved that distinction.

'This town,' he says, alluding to Anah, 'consists of a single street, whose length is five miles, and which is unequally distributed in Mesopotamia on the one side and in Arabia on the other.'

It is true that there is an Arab town on the Mesopotamian side, but it lies on another reach of the river to Anah, which is from two to three miles in length, has but one street, and several islands. It will also strike the critical reader, that one and the same street could not be unequally distributed on the two sides of

<sup>1</sup> Lynch, a good Arabic scholar, wrote it Aña. The Rev. Mr Renouard, an equally careful one, writes it A'nah (*Report on Euph. Exp.*, p. 424, and '*Anah*', p. 427). The Arabs appear to drop the final h in such names as Rawa, Basra, Ana, &c.; but we shall leave it simply Anah.

a river, any more than two long streets could enclose a small island within them.

Quitting Al Kayīm, now a mere accumulation of mounds, with a ruinous khan, a few huts, and a solitary Saracenic tower, the river took a more easterly bend, through a better peopled country, with many villages, with their water-wheels for irrigation, castles, sepulchral chapels, many islands, and a few rocks or obstructions to navigation.

Among the castles were Rafidah, Bulak, and Bu-Chaga; among the villages, Jabariyah, Zafaraniyah, Kazīm al Asayah, and Al Notara; among the more important sepulchral chapels, that of Sultan Abd Allah, and a so-called place of martyrdom; among the islands Nimmalah, Kurdan, Chedish, Zalah, Shahdadi, Jadiwah, Al Alakiyah, Tazeli, and Sarasis; and among the rocks and obstructions, Kanatirah (the bridges), Sejirah, Simanah, Al Muthadiyah Hammamah, Derya, Amiyah, and Karablah island and rocks. Upwards of thirty water-wheels were met with in this long and devious stretch, from El Kayīm to Anah, a distance of some fifty-six miles by river, but presenting a different aspect from what occurs elsewhere in being so fairly populated. The Arabs on the Arabian side were designated as the Jerifah, those on the Mesopotamian side the Silman tribes.

Approaching Anah, naked limestone rocks came down to the water on the Mesopotamian side, crossing the river and giving rise to the island and rocks of Karabilah or the 'Sieves,' the most formidable obstacle to navigation on the river.

In a kind of hollow or punch-bowl of the rocks above is the small Arab town of Rawah, a mere accumulation of mud hovels with flat roofs, huddled together on the banks of the river, or straggling up the hill side, without any intervening or relieving verdure. But immediately below is a small island, upon which are several sepulchral chapels and tombs of sheikhs and holy men, embosomed in green trees and shrubs, and presenting a picturesque appearance.

Before arriving at the Karabilah rocks, the river takes a southerly bend, recovering its easterly course as it passes Anah, and beyond Rawah, and on the Mesopotamian side the hills rise to an altitude of several hundred feet, and are crowned with the castle called Al Guman, and the tower of Karin or Al Kuraim, and they project hence like a giant wall of rock to the castle of Hubuliyah, whence they begin to take a more easterly bend.

At the season of low water the river runs at the Karabilah for six hundred yards over a mere shelf of rock; but happily they presented no serious obstruction at this season of the year, and turning round the rocky headland on the Mesopotamian side, we came upon the long, verdant, beautiful town of Anah on the one side, bluff naked rocks on the other, and the centre of the river occupied by nine different islands, clothed with verdure or dotted with ruins, and so continuous as to appear like a single strip of land. There would probably not be so many at low water. The fringe of land which is occupied by the town itself varies in depth, from about half a mile at the gardens at the

west end of the town, to the very banks of the river at its eastern extremity.

One street runs the whole length, flanked on the one side by the river, and backed on the other by gardens which are succeeded by a low rocky terrace or cliff. On the river side are also groves of palm trees, and gardens shaded by a profuse growth of apricots, plums, figs, pomegranates, and a few orange trees. Persian water-wheels worked by the current advance from these gardens into the river, creaking on their heavy axis. These lift up the water in small buckets and tilt it into long aqueducts, which are supported by light and graceful arches, and which the dripping waters have mostly clothed with a rich drapery of ferns and mosses.

The islands in the centre of the stream rise very little above the level of the waters, and none of them have rock terraces, but they are embellished by a dense and luxuriant vegetation, chiefly of palm-trees and pomegranate, out of which peered the ruins of former habitations, and here and there the whitewashed dome of a sepulchral chapel.

In the largest of all, to the south-eastwards, were the ruins of a once extensive castle. This old island castle was connected by a bridge, now in ruins, to the Arabian side, and by an irregular ridge of rocks and masonry, called Nizan, to the Mesopotamian. These, as may be imagined, constitute at the low season serious impediments to navigation. At that time the waters tumble over the ledge on the east side, with a fall of about two feet, in a broken foam. On the west side,



one of the arches of the bridge being broken, a steamer can be steered through with due care. A wall extending across from the upper part of the island to the western shore also crosses the passage, but being broken down near the island it has a narrow pass from thirty to forty feet wide. This gate is surmounted by a parapet which advances from the island just above it, and turns the water at an angle into the main stream. On the hills beyond the town were two small Arabian castles, called Abd Allah and Zahun, and another of a similar character, called Abû-n-diyah, defended the further extremity of the cliffs on the Mesopotamian side.

The arrival of the steamer 'Euphrates' at this picturesque town caused much excitement and commotion, and as we brought to at the gardens a little above the town, its inhabitants came pouring out of their shady recesses in numbers, the gentlemen for the most part in gay and bright coloured garments, the ladies in more sombre attire.

The latter sat down in crowds by the water-side, with their faces uncovered and their noses generally adorned with a large turquoise, gazing at us with much curiosity. A few of the more strict Mussulmans were much scandalised at this proceeding, and they began to belabour the unfortunate fair sex with their canes with the view of driving them back into the town, but female curiosity prevailed; the ladies kept their position in spite of such active interposition, and as the greater number of persons present did not interfere, the minority was soon obliged to discontinue their churlish and ungallant hostility.

The population of Anah is mixed. There is a goodly sprinkling of Christians and some Jews, but the Mussulmans predominate. Among the latter are a sect who assume greater sanctity than their brethren, as claiming a direct descent from the Ommiade ('Ummiah) or Syrian Khalifs. They hence call themselves the Beni 'Ummiah. These haughty Mussulmans, who cherish an inveterate hostility to the Shi'ahs, or followers of Ali, presented a great difference to their Mesopotamian brethren dwelling in the sequestered town of Rawah. The brown kerchief bound to the head by a twisted cord of wool, like a wisp of straw, and the dusty abba, were supplanted by turbans of irreproachable whiteness and with ample folds, interspersed occasionally with the green emblems of a Hajji or pilgrim to Mekka, or of a descendant of the Prophet himself. The persons of the better class were also enshrouded in cloaks of scarlet or of other bright colours.

These Ommiade Arabs, nominally subjects of the Sultan, have from remote times lived under princes or chiefs of their own, whose retinue has, however, been insufficient to protect the town from the predatory inroads of the Bedawin of the desert, to whom they are thus forced to pay a contribution, for the Osmanlis, to whom they are also tributary, afford them no protection in return.

Ibn Haukal describes Anah as being in his time a pleasant place, well supplied with provisions, and governed by an Ommiade Emir, called Abbas ben al 'Ummar al Ghani. In the early part of the seventeenth century Texiera found the place governed by an emir,

called Abû Risha or the 'father of feathers,' whose power extended hence to Palmyra. In the time of Olivier the ruling prince had only twenty-five men in his service, and that traveller describes the place as depopulating every day from the want of protection from the Arabs of the desert.

At the present time the Arabs dwell in the north-westerly part of the town, the Christians in the centre, and the Jews in the more remote quarter in the south-east.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## BOUNDARIES OF PERSIA AND PARTHIA.

THE castle on the island represents that known in the time of Julian as Anatha.<sup>1</sup> It is distinctly described as being in such a situation by Ammianus Marcellinus (xxiv. 2), and Cellarius reads the historian in that light, ‘Anathan munimentum, quod Euphrates circumluebat’ (p. 718). Isidorus of Charax also describes the castle as being on an island, and Zozimus speaks of an island on which was a castle which received Julian. Libanus alone writes of it as *Kerroneson*, or on a chersonesus or peninsula.

From the moment that the Emperor Julian, by passing the Khaboras, had entered into the country of an active and artful enemy, the order of march is described by his historians, Ammianus and Zozimus, as being disposed in three columns. A column of several legions was led by the brave Nevitta along the banks of the Euphrates, in sight of the fleet. The strength of the army was placed in the centre under Victor, while

<sup>1</sup> Ammianus has it Anatha (lib. xxiv. c. ii); Characenus Isidorus (p. 4) Anatho; Theophylactus Simocatta (lib. iv. c. x) Anothon, and in lib. v. c. ii. Anæthon.

the left flank was protected by the cavalry under Hormisdas and Arintheus. Lucilianus led the advance guard, composed of a flying detachment of fifteen hundred light armed soldiers, while the rear guard was under the charge of the Prince of Edessa or Osrhoene.

Julian himself moved rapidly with a small escort of cavalry to the front from the flanks or the rear, wherever his presence could animate or protect the march of the Roman army, which was perpetually harassed by Surenas the Persian general, and the Malik or king of the tribe of Gassan, called by the Latins, Rhodosaces, and described as '*famosi nominis latro*,' who incessantly hovered round the army. Ammianus, speaking of these Arabs, expressively assimilates their life to a long flight, and compares them to kites hovering over their prey.

The warlike inhabitants of Anatho were the first to show a disposition to stop the march of the Roman Emperor, and on Lucilianus's approach, he was quickly compelled to retreat upon the main body. The Emperor coming up, he entered into negotiation with the inhabitants through the medium of Hormisdas (Ormusd), a Persian prince of the royal race of the Sassanides, and who had taken refuge from persecution at the court of Constantine; but while the negotiation was proceeding, a hurricane (as we have before seen) came on from the desert, and the fleet being in a spot which is rendered dangerous by many rocks and rapids (probably at the bend of the river at Karabileh, for they would not venture to approach the castle), had many boats destroyed and others disabled, while the natives

added to the disaster and confusion by attacking the wrecked.

Incensed by this treachery, Julian is described as crossing the river, preceded by a crowned ox. He then burnt the fort of Anatho, and sent the majority of the inhabitants in exile to Chalcis, now Kinisrin ; but the governor of the place, called by the Latins Pusæus, was taken into friendship, and admitted to an honourable rank in the Roman service.

Gibbon's account of the reduction of Anatho is that its inhabitants at first showed a warlike disposition till they were diverted from such fatal presumption by the mild exhortations of Prince Hormisdas and the approaching terrors of the fleet and army. 'They implored,' he says, 'and experienced, the clemency of Julian, who transplanted the people to an advantageous settlement near Chalcis in Syria.'

According to Ibn Haukal, the castle of Anatho was afterwards called by the Arabians Hisn Musalamāh, from its having been restored by an Arab bearing the name of Musalamāh Ben Abdal-al-lilk.

Julian did not, however, always meet with such easy conquests as at Anatho. On an island beyond was a castle of ancient renown, which could afford to disregard his menaces and hostilities alike. This was the Thilutha of Ammianus. It is now called Tilbes (or Talbes by Balbi), and there are the ruins of a castle still on the island, as also the remains of a bridge on both sides of the river, and a little beyond it on the Arabian side are some artificial excavations, probably sepulchral grottoes.

Gibbon's account of what occurred to Julian at this spot is that 'the impregnable fortress of Thilutha could scorn the menace of a siege, and the Emperor was obliged to content himself with an insulting promise, 'that when he had subdued the interior provinces of Persia, Thilutha would no longer refuse to grace the triumph of a conqueror.'

Ptolemy notices the islanded fortresses of Anatho, under the names of Addæa and Pacoria, and Tilbes under that of Teridata.

These names, Cellarius justly pointed out, have reference to a Parthian, and to a Persian sovereign, and there is every reason to believe that at one period, and that in the time of Julian, the Parthians held Anah, and the Persians Tilbes, as a limit to their power.

The surname rendered Pacorus by the Romans, belonged to the twenty-fourth and twenty-ninth kings of the Parthian dynasty, and the period when Roman and Parthian power became most seriously opposed was that important epoch which intervened between the campaigns of Crassus and Ventidius and the rise of Augustus.

At that period the Parthians held possession of the Euphrates, where they established strongholds in opposition to Rome on the one hand and Persia on the other. Thence they advanced into Syria, in which country we have already traced the spot at which Pacorus, son of Orodes, fell.

The father having sunk under the grief occasioned by the loss of his son, he was succeeded by Arsaces XV., sur-named Phraates, from his equestrian accomplishments.

But this Phraates had also a competitor for the throne in one Tiridates, whose pretensions were afterwards supported by Augustus.

Now according to Isidorus of Charax, the Parthians had a Gaza or treasury at Anah, known as Phraates Gaza, or 'the treasury of Phraates;' and the same writer has Olabus, twelve schœni from Anatho, and where was also a Parthian or Persian treasury. This corresponds with Tilbes, which Ptolemy designates as Teridata, from its having been held by Teridates, and having been his treasury or strong-place.

Hence we have every reason to conclude that whilst Phraates had his stronghold and treasury at Anatho, Teridates had his at Tilbes or Thilutha, in opposition the one to the other. Hence also was the same stronghold called Pacoria by Ptolemy, after the warlike son of Orodes, and which name is miswritten Phatusæ by Zozimus.

It appears from the records of Julian's historians, that the name of Anah or Anatho dated then from remote times, and as it was a favourite site of the Parthians it may have derived this name from their Anahîd—the Anaia, Anaïas, and Anaitis of the Greeks, and the Diana of the Romans.

As to the word Gaza as significative of 'treasury,' the Greeks uniformly admit the adoption of the word from the Persian. Brisson, in his work '*De Reg. Persic. Princip.*' (p. 157), has collected the evidence on this subject, and Sir Henry Rawlinson has established it to be of Semitic origin, probably early naturalised in Persia, but modified in modern times into Ganj.



We remained at Anah until Tuesday, May 31, the interval being chiefly occupied in examining the difficulties presented by the river at this point to future navigation.

Colonel Chesney had, indeed, provided the expedition with a diving-bell, in the fear that these difficulties might prove insuperable without deepening the channel, but as we have before seen, it was on account of its cumbersomeness left behind.

As, however, Captain Lynch has since succeeded in surmounting these difficulties with the steamers 'Nitocris' and 'Nimrod' at low water, they are not insuperable. Nor are they of any importance; for if ever a line of communication is adopted, the facilities afforded by an almost level country, of, with a few exceptions, fragile rocks, to a railway, would always supersede a circuitous navigation of the river, replete with peril and danger at the time of low water.

While thus engaged, several of the bodies of our late comrades came floating by, and natives were employed to swim out into the stream and bring them in, when they were decently buried. They were, however, so disfigured as to be no longer recognisable.

I have often thought what must have been the feelings of the inhabitants of the place at seeing us thus engaged? For the first time a fire-ship, as they called it, had come crowded with strangers to their garden in the desert, and it appeared as if followed by a succession of floating corpses! But although Anah is as it were almost severed from the rest of the world, and isolated in the very heart of Arabian and Mesopotamian wildernesses, it had by no means an uncivilised aspect.

The Ommiade Arabs, proud of their descent from the Khalifat, where science and literature were cultivated to as high a degree of perfection as in Europe, were still vain of their learning and erudition; the Christians constituted the industrious and really learned portion of the community, and the Jews, ever energetic and enterprising, could not but sympathise with us as far as the religious prejudices of some of them would permit.

A merchant of the place sought me out to obtain advice concerning a leprosy he had once been afflicted with, but the taint of which had gone by. He was not, however, satisfied with this information, but requested me to adjourn to his domicile, a proposition which, desirous as I was to see something of their interior life, I willingly acceded to.

On arriving, we had the customary coffee and pipes in a kiosk, in a beautiful garden. After some time and much demurring with himself, he asked me if his malady was contagious. I told him that I no longer believed it to be so. His joy at this announcement seemed to know no bounds, and he insisted that I should be introduced to his harem.

We accordingly adjourned to another and more secluded part of the garden, where in another kiosk, shaded by vines and perfumed by the blossoms of roses and myrtle, I was introduced to two young wives, while two daughters, who seemed to be about the respective ages of thirteen and fourteen, and very good looking, brought conserves on a tray, and a gold-embroidered napkin for the Hakim-Bashi, as they called me, to wipe my mouth with. These sweets were

accompanied with scented waters, and followed by the inevitable pipe and coffee.

My host was, however, some little time before he gathered courage to speak.

‘I have consulted the great doctor of the Franks,’ he ventured at length, ‘my dears, upon my illness.’

‘Well,’ replied the ladies both together, in a tone of anything but proper respect for their lord and master.

‘And he says it is not contagious,’ blurted out the unfortunate husband, who was evidently tabooed by his wives.

‘Is that true?’ said one of the ladies to myself, with a contemptuous and sceptical expression.

I bowed assent.

‘You see,’ said the head of the house, rising triumphantly, and endeavouring to take the last-mentioned lady by the hand, ‘the doctor says so.’

The young damsels, who had been standing in the interim a little apart, now began tittering aloud, and altogether the manners of the ladies were so utterly wanting in decorum, that I thought it best to withdraw as quickly as etiquette would permit me. There was certainly no restraint on their part.

Passing through the town my partiality for fossils nearly got me into trouble. The limestone at Anah is remarkably fossiliferous, and among the abundant shells were some cones of a gigantic size. Seeing one of these, of unusually colossal proportions, utilised in the construction of a wall, I made an endeavour to appropriate it, when I was at once made to desist from my

labours by the threatening intervention of a stalwart Christian husbandman, the master of the house.

The officers of the 'Tigris' steamer left us at Anah. Captains Lynch and Eden put themselves under the guidance of the Arabs of Rawah, to conduct them across the Mesopotamian desert to Mosul. Thomson went back with Durwish Ali to finish the line of levels from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. Mr. Hector was left at Anah, with a seaman to assist him, to await the fall of the waters, in order to recover all possible property from the 'Tigris,' in which undertaking he succeeded to a considerable extent. The Messrs. Staunton accompanied us as far as Baghdad, where they joined a caravan bound for Syria. As the poor fellows had lost their all with the sinking of their ship, there was a general contribution made to meet their necessities—a thing which, with our limited kit, was not effected without entailing some inconvenience on others.

## CHAPTER XX.

## A DAY AND NIGHT ON THE BANKS OF THE EUPHRATES.

THE morning that the steamer left Anah, after clearing the town and getting beyond the bend here made by the river to a more southerly reach, her head was brought to up the current, alongside of the Mesopotamian shore, which was here a level greensward, backed at a short distance by a low rocky terrace.

Leaping ashore with others, I, after exchanging a few words with Colonel Chesney and Fitzjames, who were conversing together, proceeded up to the cliffs in search of fossils. These were numerous beyond description. The marls were in fact a bed of shells. Absorbed in filling my pockets with these relics of a world more ancient than that of Babylon, I failed to notice that the steamer had turned round and was on its way down the river. In fact she was already some way down the stream before I became aware of the sad predicament in which I had been left.

An infinitesimal portion of time was sufficient to render me aware of the perplexity of my position. My habitual custom on board the steamer, during the descent of the river, was to sit in front of one of the paddle-boxes, taking notes of the configuration, and as

far as I could, of the nature of the soil; Colonel Chesney sat at the bows, taking notes of all details, and the other officers were busy superintending the navigation of a river which was new to them, and required the most vigilant look-out.

I felt at once therefore that I should not be missed till the steamer came to anchor. I was on the Mesopotamian side of the river, and could not cross it to join Hector and get a boat, and I had before me a district, probably sparsely inhabited, and if so by lawless and predatory Arabs. I had no arms, and examining my purse, I found I had luckily four ghazis—small gold coins of four shillings each. Two of these I secreted in my watch-fob, leaving two ready for demand. As to my precious fossils, I had to leave them behind me, and I started off at a rate of about four miles an hour, to overtake a steamer which was descending the river fourteen to twenty miles in the same time, but which I knew would bring up at night.

I had not walked above an hour when I came to a village, near which a group of fellahs or workmen were sitting beside a corn-rick. They were so hidden by the rick, that I joined the party unobserved. They were greatly surprised at seeing a stranger among them, and like all Arabs in similar circumstances, were at first frightened and distrustful, and then when they became aware that there was no danger, rude and malicious.

My object was to obtain a guide, so as to be better able to save the bends of the river and thus shorten my journey, and at the same time act as some sort of protection against other Arabs I might meet on the way.

The fellahs, however, said it was impossible to go by day, as there were Bedawin on the road, but that if I would stop till night, one of them would go on with me.

This, with the distance before me, was out of the question, so I went into the village to the house of the Sheikh, whom I found surrounded by his family, and who received me in the usual distrustful manner. After some altercation, it was agreed that I should give my handkerchief—they wanted my neck-tie—to a favourite daughter, and deposit a ghazi with the Sheikh to remunerate a guide. Although doubting the sincerity of the Arabs, I had no choice but to comply, and so we started—the guide first taking off his shoes—at a good pace.

We kept this up for two hours with little conversation, till we came to the Wady Sur—a mere ditch, but with water in it—and crossed by a stone bridge, at which we fell in with another peasant. My guide putting on his shoes at this point entered into an earnest colloquy with the new comer, which from various significative signs and movements it was easy to see had reference to me, and to the possible number of ghazis I might have in my possession.

When I pressed my guide to hasten on, he laughed at me and asked for money, which being unwilling to grant, as he would only have asked for more, and when he had got all I had would have left me all the same in the lurch, I left him with his friend and proceeded on my way.

From this point until I reached the cultivated plain

off the island of Haditha or Hadisa, I met with no more villages. There were, however, on the river itself, only a mile or two beyond Tilbes, a village and castle called Sheibiyah. Beyond the point where the Wadi Sur flowed into the river, the Al Aghadir and Muharah hills rose up on the Arabian side, with an islanded castle called J'era or Kura. The rocks also advanced at this point into the river, causing an obstruction known as Zawiyah or the 'Corner,' written Zawyhe by Texeira, and Zovia by Balbi.

Beyond this point the river is forced into a very circuitous course by the Jebel Habib el Najar, and what are designated as the Kullibah hills on the Mesopotamian side, and the Ansajiyah hills, or Jebel Susa, on the Arabian.

There are several islands in this part of the river, some so large as to have been formerly cultivated, as attested by the presence of ruinous water-wheels and aqueducts, which are also met with occasionally on the left bank of the river. A castle called Sarifah is also met with in this district, and near it is a mound of debris or ruin called Tell Sertalij.

The country was low and undulating, but pretty generally level, and the tract I selected was pleasant walking, partly sand or gravel, with some green-sward, and separated from the river by three or four hundred yards of bushes and jungle, but of an open character. It seemed indeed, except when I had to make short cuts to save the bends of the river, to have been an old and well-worn line of road. In the present day there were not traces even of a pathway,



but still it remained as a kind of open roadway, unobstructed by shrubs. To the left was nothing but wilderness with crassulated plants, mimosa and wormwood, rising at times into low barren hills.

Towards evening I arrived at the foot of a low range of hills which stretched out some distance to the west ; and as the river diverged in the same direction, it was natural to suppose that when it had broken through this rocky barrier, it would resume its south-easterly course, and that my plan was simply to cross the hills without regard to the river course. Whilst tracking a narrow valley in order to carry out this object, a troop of jackals bounded past me, but in little more than an hour I had gained the crest of the hills, whence a beautiful prospect presented itself to my view, consisting of a long stretch of green and level plain, occasionally wooded but without a habitation, and watered by the Euphrates, which, as I had anticipated, had twined round the hills and now lay at my feet scarcely three miles distant.

It was in vain, however, that my aching eyes followed the long line of white light which the river presented in the hour of eve, to try and discern a steamer. Nothing of the kind was to be seen, nor a single village or hut, only here and there an aqueduct, a relic of bygone days.

For a moment my heart almost misgave me. Night was coming on, and had it been an undulating or hilly country, hope would have borne me on over each successive eminence ; but here the expanse that I had to traverse without a chance of relief, and I had been all

day without food of any description, was certainly a little disheartening.

I, however, put the best face I could upon the cheerless prospect before me. By the time I had descended into the plain the sun had dipped beneath the horizon. The evening was growing pleasant and cool, and if hitherto my walk had been solitary, it now became quite the reverse, for the whole plain seemed as if suddenly peopled with living things. Stealthy foxes of the Tartarian breed came down from the hills to drink at the river side, quickly putting their tails between their legs and skulking away when they perceived me on their path. Hyænas and wolves on the contrary were wending their way from the jungles into the interior in search of prey. What they could find there puzzled me greatly. The latter also would sometimes turn sulkily round, snarling defiance, as if questioning my right to be there, while the ever-playful jackals bounded across the plain, sometimes as if in pursuit of one another, anon darting into the woods, then issuing forth in troops of five or six, dashing up close to me, yelling or gnashing their teeth, and bristling up their backs like so many angry cats.

As my company was getting more numerous than desirable I made a stop, and as luckily I had a knife in my pocket, I cut myself as stout a branch of tamarisk as I could find, but still, even with this protection, although I was suffering from thirst, I dare not venture to cross the jungle to the river's banks. They would have had me at a disadvantage.

I had gone on this way for some little time when I

came to the foot of some hills where there was an open space leading down to the water and an aqueduct attesting to the existence of a former village at the spot. As it was now getting dark I pondered over in my mind the advisability of getting to the end of the aqueduct, and sleeping there in comparative security from wild animals.

What was my surprise then, on arriving at the said aqueduct, to find a fire lighted on the banks of the river and at the foot of the aqueduct, and an old man and a boy sitting by its side !

At my approach the old man started up, and taking the club carried as usual in his girdle, he prepared to act on the defensive. I simply laughed at him, and throwing down my stick in proof of amity, took my place by the family fireside. The boy went to the water side to fetch water in a jug, while the old man offered me bread, such as it was, and heaped wet brushwood on the fire to keep off the mosquitoes which hung in clouds over the flame.

To the questions I then asked, I made out in reply that the steamer had passed further down the river, and that he would act as my guide for the consideration of one of my ghazis when the moon had risen.

Pending this, I lay down to take some repose after my long walk, when another Arab joined the party. He had been on a plundering expedition, and seemed quite proud of his pilferings, which, tied up in an old kerchief, seemed to me to be nothing but rags.

This at all events gave me an insight into the character of my friends which was not favourable as to their

morality. They had some earnest conversation about myself, but although I had taken up a berth at some distance from them, I could make out that it ended in the old man asserting that I was his property and he could manage me.

Although old, and even bleary-eyed, he was stalwart and wiry of frame, taller than myself, and armed with a formidable weapon, a big round ball fixed to the end of a short stick or handle. As events will soon show, he counted, however, without his host. In the meantime, passing events did not affect me much, for I fell into a profound sleep.

I was awoke by a pinch of the great toe, a very simple yet very efficacious proceeding, practised by these children of nature, as the philanthropists would call them. The moon was already high up in the heavens, and a grotesque visage was peering into mine. The other man and the boy were gone. So it was time to start.

I have mentioned that I had secured the old man's services the night before by the present of a ghazi, and I took the same occasion to exhibit my empty purse, but robber Arabs are not to be taken in by such subterfuges. As we proceeded, therefore, I expected every moment to be joined by more guides than I required or desired; my only hope was that the old man's cupidity would lead him to consider me as his particular prize, and that he would make the attempt to rob me by himself, so as to save participation of profits with any one; and this hope was happily verified.

Our road lay for a short distance along the banks of

the river, which was seen to great advantage in the moonlight; but we soon came to some hills which stretched far away to the westwards, causing the stream to deviate in the same direction. It was manifest then that to shorten this bend our way lay across the hills, and my guide followed their base in an easterly direction until we came to an open stony ravine.

We had proceeded to nearly the upper part of the glen, when my Arab made signs to me to sit down whilst he reconnoitred above. This he proceeded to do by getting to the top, and then lying with only his head above the rocks, and peering over the uplands.

He had two objects in view in this proceeding. One was to see if there were any Arabs in the way who might bear hostility to himself, the other whether there was anyone likely to interfere with his projects.

What these were I was not long left in doubt about. When he returned from his inspection he sat down by my side, in closer proximity than was desirable, and began to examine the steel buckles of my braces, which shone like silver in the moonlight, as also to feel for the girdle which generally serves as a purse with Orientals. In doing this his hand trembled, betraying his intentions.

I at once rose up and seized a large stone—there were luckily no end of them about me—whilst he at the same moment raised his club in a threatening attitude, whilst he held out the other hand, rubbing the forefinger and thumb together—a significant manner of asking for money common to many parts of the world.

The indignation with which I regarded my anta-

gonist was now at its height. It is true he was tall and bony, but he was aged and not even active; his forehead was 'villanous low,' his nose long, and his eyelids red and purulent. The impulse to have it out was strong, but I was no great adept at stone-throwing, and if I missed him, he would not miss me with his big club. So I deemed it wisest to act on the defensive. It was indeed to our mutual advantage that neither of us should assume the offensive. So we walked on to the upland, I carefully keeping two or three yards of open between myself and my guide, who, however, persevered in his demands, I holding a big stone in my right hand, he his club in readiness. Taking care to be beyond the reach of the latter, we argued the matter over as we progressed in a pleasing and edifying manner.

First he asked for money; I told him I had none. Then he asked for my necktie. This was simply refused. Then he wanted my fez. I told him I could not expose my head to the sun. At last, finding he could get nothing else, he petitioned for a kerchief I had tied round my waist. Knowing the value he would set upon this, I determined to propitiate him, if possible, and gave it up. He then put his club in his waistband, and a temporary truce was established.

We now turned down a ravine and then crossed some low hills, when my guide again resumed the recumbent posture, the usual reconnoitring position of the Arabs. I advanced to the crest of the hills—day had only just broken—and a delightful prospect opened itself before me.

Close by were the usual marly cliffs, below a vast expanse of cultivated plain, bounded only by the river ; a little to the left a large village, and beyond it a long island with lofty buildings, and the ' Euphrates ' steamer lying alongside of it. My troubles, I thought, were at an end, and I rejoiced exceedingly.

But it was not destined to be entirely so. My guide would go no further. Outcast and robber as he was by profession, he no more dared to face the fellahs than he would have done the Turkish authorities, so I had to descend the cliffs by myself.

But the peasants were already at work in the fields. I had some three miles between me and the village, and I took a straight line across country to reach it. But two or three of the labourers hurried at full speed to intercept me. They were armed with small hatchets, which they waved over my head. I explained to them, as well as I could, that I had been robbed of everything on the hills, and they did not discredit my story, but contented themselves with my neck-tie without examining my person. It was the third and last I had to give.

Left thus free to pursue my way I got to the village, where a woman (as an old traveller long ago remarked, ever sympathetic with distress) gave me a draught of milk. Thus refreshed, I got down to the river banks opposite to the island ; unfortunately the steamer lay to behind some date trees on the opposite side of the island, and a long hour passed before I could attract the attention of the Arabs on the island. I succeeded at length, and the fact of my being there being communicated to

those on board, a boat was sent, and I was soon once more among my friends and companions. They had despatched natives in search of me, but as they clung to the banks of the river, they naturally missed me.

The steamer had navigated sixty-six miles, an unusually long day's journey, and granting all savings by cutting off the bends of the river, I must have walked upwards of fifty.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE PRINCIPALITY OF THE CAPTIVE JEWS.

THE island of Hadisa or Haditha, as it is variously pronounced, is a very pretty and picturesque site, with a few cottages of sedentary Arabs scattered amid date trees and pomegranates that struggle into life amid ruins of older edifices. Immediately above the island is a modern castle, commanding a camel ford at low water.

The remains of a bridge connecting the island with the Arabian side are still visible. There are several villages of agricultural Arabs in the neighbourhood, two of which, respectively designated as Ali Awis and Beni Daghir, are on islands. There are also two springs on the Arabian side, one called Aïn Simmak, or the 'fish spring,' the other Aïn Halan.

Harassed by the Bedawin who come down in harvest time to plunder the crops, and without any protection from the Osmanlis, it is not surprising that the sedentary and agricultural Arabs of this fertile district should have expressed to the commander of the Euphrates Expedition an ardent desire to pass under the rule of a nation which had found means to navigate the river, and who could therefore protect them from spoliation.

This secluded spot possesses also considerable historical interest. We enter at this point of the Lower Euphrates into what at one time constituted the Principality of the Captive Jews, whose Resh Glutha or Chief supported all the state and splendour of an Oriental sovereign, far outshining in pomp, we are told by old historians, the rival prince and patriarch at Tiberias, and that for a long time after the fane of Islamism had taken the place of the Temple of Herod, which itself had taken that of Solomon.

The district appears to have been called that of Nehar or Nahar (river) Deah or Diyah,<sup>1</sup> abbreviated into Nehardea, and in it (that is the district) were the synagogues of Nahar Diyah or Nehardea, Pomebeditha or Beditha, Sura, and others frequently alluded to in the Talmud.

D'Anville was I believe the first to identify Haditha with Nehardea, and he is supported in this identification by the Arabian geographers, who call the place Al Nur, or the 'Luminous,' from the circumstance of its having been a celebrated seat of learning among the Jews.

Josephus, in his 'Antiquities' (lib. xviii. 'Antiq. Jud.,' cap. xii.) describes Nehardea as a populous Babylonian town, possessing fertile and extensive lands, and capable of defying an enemy, being surrounded on all sides by strong walls and the river Euphrates. Ptolemy places Naarda, as he writes it, in Mesopotamia, but Cellarius justly remarks upon this, that it was a limittrophal country between Mesopotamia and Babylonia.

<sup>1</sup> Region or district on the river, as in Diyah Bekr, Diyah Rabbia, and Diyah Mudhar, in Mesopotamia.

Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbon, who travelled in the latter end of the twelfth century,<sup>1</sup> describes Nehardea as comprising more than the island, for he says: 'The city has a circuit of about three days, but everything is desolate. There is a congregation in a portion of the city.' And when he produced the seal of the head of the Academy (at that time residing in Baghdad), they showed him the synagogue Shaf Wyathib. 'Its three walls are of stone, and the western wall is on the river Euphrates.' 'No portion of the wall,' the Rabbi goes on to say with an inconsistency that is difficult to explain, 'is built of either stone or brick, but consists entirely of the dust which Jechaniah brought with him. The synagogue has no roof, for everything is desolate.' And the Jews told him that in the night they saw a column of fire issue from it, extending as far as to the grave of Brusaak.

The ruins of this ancient synagogue are also noticed by Benjamin of Tudela. Mention is also made of it in the Talmud (Rosh Hashanah xxiv. 6; Meghillah xxix. 9). 'Its name,' Dr. Benisch says in a note, 'is explained to mean demolished and rebuilt, in allusion to its supposed origin; its material having, as stated, been derived from a sacred building in Palestine.'

The river below Haditha continues to be encumbered with islands, and at one place, called Zerdan, by rocks, till one of greater extent than the rest is reached at a distance of about six miles from Haditha, and upon which is the so-called town of Al Uzz.

<sup>1</sup> *Travels of Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbon*. Translated from the Hebrew by Dr. A. Benisch, with explanatory notes by the Translator and W. F. Ainsworth, F.S.A. &c. London, 1856.

The islands between Haditha and Al Uzz are, in succession, Ali Awis, Beni Daghir, Hadi, Halan, Al Halniyah, Nayisa, Sultan Haji, and Abbasiyah. Some of these names are very suggestive, as is also the case with a site beyond Al Uzz, called Suwaïdiya or Seleucia.

A few huts amid ruins and verdure—the islanded counterpart of Haditha—are all that remain in the present day to represent the Izanesopolis or Uzanesopolis of Isidorus of Charax, which was between Olabus and Aïpolis (bitumen city, Hit).

Ammianus Marcellinus notices, after Thilutha, Achaiachala, which might be rendered Ak Kaya Kalah, or ‘the castle of the white rock.’

This castle was on an island, and as it came next to Thilutha, it is apparently the same as Jera or Kura, and it was at that time so strong, that it was not deemed advisable by Julian to waste time over its reduction.

The distance of 200 stadia, or twenty miles, given from Achaiachala to Baiasmalcha or Baraxmalcha identifies the latter site with Haditha. The name given by Ammianus to the place has reference to its being a princely or royal residence, just as we find the same writer giving to the Nahar Malik or ‘Royal river’ the name of Naarmalcha.

Crossing the river at this point, and we have seen that there are the remains of a bridge at Haditha, Julian proceeded to Diakira or Dakira, as Zozimus has it, seven Roman miles below Baiasmalcha, and hence corresponding to the castellated island of Dowaliyah.

The latter is five miles below Al Uzz, and has on

the Arabian side of the river a little below the island, and opposite to it, a rock called Khadr Iliyas, another of the resting places of the prophet Elias or Elijah, the tradition connected with whose wanderings has already been alluded to.

Scarcely three miles below this rock on the river, a rivulet, said to be nearly dry in summer, and designated the Wadi Hauran, joins the river. It is said, as its name would imply, to come all the way from the Hauran in Palestinē. If so, it must be of immense importance to the Arabs dwelling south of Palmyra.

There is a camel ford below the point of junction, as also a castle called Kadiyah, and beyond this a few aqueducts dot the banks to the islanded town or castle of Jibbah or Jubbah.

Benjamin of Tudela saves all trouble of identification by his attesting that Al Jabar, as he writes it, is the site of Pomebeditha of the Jewish Captivity, and one of the most distinguished schools in their principality. D'Anville also remarks that the position given to Pomebeditha in the Oriental part of the 'Orbis Romani' corresponds to the position of Jubbah. Its actual name is indeed only a corruption or vulgarisation of its olden name.

It is to be observed that there is much difference of opinion in regard to D'Anville's identification of Haditha with Nehardea. The whole district is associated by some with that of the Nahar Sares or Naarsares, afterwards the Pallacopas, on the Arabian side of the Euphrates. The fact of Sura, a city of the Captivity,

being on the same canal, would lend countenance, as well as the name, to this conclusion.<sup>1</sup>

But those who thus remove Nehardea to the alluvial plains of Babylonia also identify Pomebeditha with Haditha. Beditha is spoken of by Neubauer in his '*Géographie du Talmud*' as meaning a canal or pass, and there is a remote connection between Beditha and Haditha. The place, according to Neubauer (p. 345), was the 'Golah' or capital of the exiles (Rosh Hashanah). But then again Nehardea is described as being twenty-two parasangs north of Sura, which would carry us back again to Jubbah.

Then, again, we have the authority of Benjamin of Tudela, himself a Jew, and if not always a pattern of correctness, is still to be depended upon in geographical identifications, that Jubbah was Pomebeditha, and we have seen that this corresponds with the position given to Pomebeditha in that portion of the '*Notitiæ Orbis Romani*' which is devoted to the East. Jubbah may indeed, as before observed, be a mere vulgarisation and softening down of Pomebeditha.

Nehardea again, according to Neubauer, was on the Nahr Malka, and not on the Nahr Sares; and what is more curious is that Tilius places Pomebeditha on the Arabian side of the river, near the confluence of the Saocoras<sup>2</sup> (Cell., pp. 638). This would make the Wadi Sur the termination of that river viewed as a canal, and brought all the way from the Khabūr to the Lower

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 15.

<sup>2</sup> For previous reference to the Saocoras, see the chapter on the Habor, as also Appendix 16.

Euphrates. Not having explored the country it would have to traverse, I cannot venture an opinion upon an idea that has also been embraced by others, but it is pretty certain that the supposed canal must have had to be carried through many ranges of hills.

On the island itself the cottages of Arabs and the sepulchral chapels of their sheikhs and holy men are dispersed with the fragmentary ruins of olden time—castle and synagogue, and other relics of antiquity, amid a dense growth of date trees and pomegranates.

There was also a village with traces of olden time on the Mesopotamian side of the river, and the dome of a mosque towered in the same direction over far-spreading groves and gardens. This place was called by the Arabs Ibn Hasan. Below the island of Jubbah, and on the Arabian side, was also another village, with its castle called Hawaji Jubbah, and on the opposite side of the river was the mausoleum of another Mussulman sheikh. The name given to this latter village would indicate that it was inhabited by Christians at the time that the opposite bank was held by Mussulmans.

Three miles below Jubbah, the navigation was obstructed by rocks, called Medaniyah, where there is said to be only four feet of water in the low season; and close by, on the Arabian side, is a mosque or imâm to which tradition points as a place of martyrdom. A village attached to the building is called Baghdadiyah, or of the people from Baghdad, so that the tradition would appear to point to the expulsion or persecution of some inhabitants of the city of the Khalifs.

At this point the river makes a great bend through

a hilly district variously designated as Abūl Us, Muri-jifah, and Ja'al hills, and which extends a distance of fifteen miles to a castle, with an aqueduct known as Madruk.

The banks of the river were for the most part wooded throughout this hilly region, which is composed of sandstones, marls, gypsum, ironstone, saliferous clays, and bituminous shales.

The chief points of interest that presented themselves in the same interval were the tower of El Taim on the Mesopotamian side, and Imām Amīs, a sepulchral chapel on the Arabian, in a grove, with Nawas island in front, and a tower and aqueduct, also on the same side, a little further on.

Below was a castle called Al Kuraf, with a rocky obstruction in the river, another sepulchral chapel, and the tower of Maliyah on the Mesopotamian side. Several other towers, as Madij el Burj and Sayyid Muhammad, were also met with, as well as aqueducts, mostly in ruin. There were also two villages, Al Mashukah, or 'the beloved,' and Sheikh Faraji, a curious rock in the river, called Safariyah, and Al Kasr, the castle *par éminence*, opposite to Madruk, where the river resumes its normal course.

The same description of country of low hills, with occasional woods on the river banks, several aqueducts, of which very few had their wheels attached to them, three Arab castles, Menakerah, Beit Ayūb, and Kasr Sadi, one or two villages, Saliyah and others, tombs or sepulchral chapels dedicated to Sheikhs Sadi and Jeladah, one large island and several smaller ones, the Hajar el



Dawaliyah and Hajar el Dibs, hills on the Mesopotamian side, and the Sheikh Hafa hills, lie between Madruk castle and the now miserable town of Hit, celebrated, however, for its fountains of naphtha and bitumen, a distance by river of eleven miles.

No portion of the river Euphrates left so painful an impression of former prosperity and present poverty as this lower part. Laying aside the remains of antiquity, there are evidences in the numerous aqueducts that line the river of comparatively modern and even recent irrigation, cultivation, and industry. Unprotected by a supine government, and harassed by lawless, plundering Bedwins, what was once life, animation, and wealth, is now almost utter desolation.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE 'GATES OF PARADISE.'

HIT, the Is of Herodotus and Aiopolis of Ammianus Marcellinus, has been celebrated from all antiquity for its never-failing fountains of naphtha, petroleum, and bitumen, and which served at once to cover the bricks of which Babel was built, and the coracles by which the river was navigated.

They were visited by Alexander the Great, by Trajan, by Severus, and by Julian. They furnished the imperishable mortar by which the Babylonian bricks were cemented, and they still cover the Gopher (Kayîr), boats of the Euphrates, the asphaltic coracles of the Tigris, and the tiradas of the Khaldæan Arabs, as they did in the time of the father of history.

There are several fountains at or near Hit. Two of the largest are met with about a mile from the actual village or town. These fountains are like circular ponds; the waters are thermal and saline, and the naphtha bubbles up with gases (hydrosulphuric acid), gradually, by exposure to the air, becoming petroleum, and when hardened on the brinks of the fountains, bitumen. The water is also received in shallow reservoirs, the evaporation of which produces a considerable

quantity of salt, which in the present day constitutes by far the most valuable produce of the springs.

Sulphur is also precipitated, but not in sufficient quantities to be of any commercial value. The historian Xiphilinus describes the chief fountain as a lake of sulphur, and Dion Cassius asserts that the exhalation from the springs was so strong that no animal or bird could breathe it without dying. The temperature of the springs varied very much, one indicating 88° of Fahr., while another raised the thermometer to 98°. I could not ascertain from the guardians of the springs whether this difference was, as at other places, associated with the antiquity of the one fountain and the more recent origin of the hotter fountain.

The formations from which these springs issued forth are argillaceous limestones, often magnesian, when they have a cerous or waxy lustre, with coarse crystalline gypsum superimposed. Brown hæmatites, bituminous shales, and crystalline sulphur were also found in the vicinity. The saliferous sandstones or clays probably lay beneath.

As there are no igneous rocks in the neighbourhood, they appear to owe their temperature to chemical action, due to the presence of water, by which new affinities are brought into play, gypsum or sulphate of lime being decomposed, hydrosulphuric acid given off, and free sulphur deposited. The waters bringing at the same time chloride of sodium from the saliferous clays or sandstones, and these being dissolved, the excess of chlorine would give birth to chlorides of lime and magnesium, as well as of soda. In the same way the

sulphuric acid of the sulphate of lime unites with the same earthy bases to form sulphates, as likewise with the alumina of the clay to form sulphate of alumina. Aluminites (Hallites), were met with on the brinks of the wells and brooks. The carbonaceous products are derived from the bituminous shales which are found pretty generally accompanying the marls, gypsum, and saliferous deposits south of Anah.

The presence of these gifts of nature does not, for some reason or other, appear to have made Hit a prosperous place. Besides a productive market for salt, naphtha, and bitumen, no doubt heavily taxed if not monopolised by the Pashas of Baghdad, it is also a station on the caravan road; and yet it is a most poverty-stricken place, with about a hundred huts, and only a few stunted date trees growing around. It seems to have been in pretty nearly the same condition in Olivier's time, as he describes it as a poor town of some thousand inhabitants, and he adds, a few date trees grew around it.

The Oriental geographers make mention of the tomb of Abdullah, son of Mubak, a Mussulman of great sanctity, as existing at this place. But the only sepulchral chapel existing in the present day was designated as that of Sheikh Ahmed.

Already, at Hit, the ranges of hills become lower, the slopes are more gentle, verging off into an undulating country, while the valley of the river begins to expand, all denoting a near approach to the alluvial plains of Babylonia.

The Banan and Zuhair districts on the Arabian side

are confronted by those of the El Hoda, Beni Mara, Beni Amir, and Beni Mujab (possibly, from their names, remnants of Jewish origin converted to Islamism) on the Mesopotamian side. This region, extending to the great salt lake, and including several naphtha fountains, generally known as that of Nafatah, or the region of naphtha, comprised about eighteen miles of navigation. There are within the same district two large islands, Haji Ahmed and Hasan Khadiyeh, besides several smaller ones. Five castles—Sawab, Zawiyah (?), Banah, Al Muhallahi, or the twin castles, and Kalat al Zumadi. I have marked the name given to one of these with a point of interrogation, for I suspect that when our Arab pilot did not know or did not remember the name of a place, he would get over the difficulty by saying, Zawiyah, 'the corner'! The same repetition of name will be found in Balbi and Texiera.

This region comprises the same number of villages as castles, numerous aqueducts for irrigation, many tells or mounds of debris, denoting ancient sites, a small salt lake on the Mesopotamian side, five miles below Hit, and a natural cave known as Buhas.

It appears also to be very probable that this district of Nafatah, with its castles, lake, villages, mounds, and naphtha springs represents that portion of the Principality of the Captive Jews of which mention is made by Benjamin of Tudela under the name of Nachata (Hudson's 'Geog. Minores,' iii. 9; Wright's 'Early Travels,' p. 101; and Asher's 'Notes to Benjamin of Tudela,' No. 269).

Below the Nafatah district both sides of the river

are at first occupied by the Bordin Arabs, and these are followed on the Arabian side by the Burtan and Duleim, and on the Mesopotamian by the Delim tribes. These are, however, almost as much names as realities, for the villages existing between Hit and the Al Asayah, or 'lake of pebbles,' on the Mesopotamian side, and Jazrūn Lake on the Arabian, are few in number, and thinly populated; Nafatah village and Jawah on the left bank, Jerafat and Kotniyah on the right, with three or four encampments, constitute all that these insignificant sub-tribes can count as their possessions.

The district around Al Asayah lake is tenanted by the Abū Faraj Arabs, with three villages, Al Asnyah, Baliwan and Dekkah.

The hills on the limits of Mesopotamia dwindle gradually away before coming to the lakes—the line between that country and Babylonia being marked in olden times by the Wall of Media, but on the Arabian side they advance a little further to the southwards, pressing upon the river valley of Lake Jazrūn, and bearing upon the last and dominant projection a Muhammadan edifice called Masjid Sandabiyah, which itself stands amidst ruins of older times.

There is, indeed, every reason to believe that a site, overlooking as it does what the Talmudists designated as the Gates of Paradise, and regarded with veneration by the Arabs as being the last remnant of rocky lands, was also a seat of worship in antiquity, for Isidorus of Charax (who stands, in regard to Babylonia, in the same position that Strabo does to Cilicia, being a native of the country), describes the site under the name of

Besachana, and as having a temple dedicated to the goddess Atargatis.

Julian, it is also to be remarked, proceeding from Hit went to Ozogardana, where he was shown the throne of Trajan. Zozimus makes mention of two small sites named respectively Sitha and Megia, as being between Hit and Zaragardia, as he spells the Ozogardana of Ammianus. These may possibly correspond to the castles of Sawab and Al Muhallahi.

Zozimus describes the throne of Trajan as being lofty and constructed of stone. There could not be a more remarkable site at which to erect a so-called 'throne' than at the seat of the temple of Atargatis—the last elevated eminence of all the rocky formations that extend from Taurus to Babylonia, and commanding as it does a view of the most ancient sites in the world, and of the cradle of the human race.

Oriental pomp and pride record many examples of a similar character. The Takht-i-Sulaiman or throne of Solomon, on the plain of Murghab, still represents the throne of the ancient kings of Persia, where the Kayanian monarchs used to sit in public, in unison with Oriental requirements and in conformity with an Oriental climate. Such also was the Takht-i-Jamshid, or throne of Dejoces, at Persepolis; the Takht-i-Balkis, the throne of the Queen of Sheba; and the Takht-i-Khusrau, the throne of Chosroes at Ctesiphon. The city of Queen Zabda, and the Atræa of the Romans, had its open court and throne, and even the captive Valerian appears to have had a throne allotted to him, for a mound on the plain of Susiana, crowned with the ruins

of an ancient edifice, still bears the name of Takht-i-Kaisar, or Cæsar's throne.

In the same district, at the foot of the hills, and on the Mesopotamian side, was the termination of the Sidd, or Khalū Nimrūd, known to antiquity as the Wall of Media, the site of the Pulai or Pylæ (Gates) of Xenophon, and of the Massices and Macepracta of the Romans. A little below, and on the Arabian side, was Kalah Ramadi—the site of Charmande of the Athenian historian. This in the district of Sura of the Captivity, still known by the same name with the lake of Jazrūn, and the first derivative or canal taken from the Euphrates, and one of very considerable historical interest.

We have already noticed that this natural entrance into Babylonia and Khaldæa was, according to Neubauer, in his '*Géographie du Talmud*' (p. 327), known to the Jews as the 'Gates of Paradise;' and Sir Henry Rawlinson has accumulated a vast mass of evidence to show, what appears to be the case, that the plain of Babylonia constituted as a whole, or in part, the original of the idea of a 'Garden of Eden.'

It would be difficult to imagine a more imposing scene than that which must have been presented to view in ancient times, from a temple and throne situated as were those of Atargatis and Trajan, upon the extreme confines of the hills that overlooked the great plains of Babylonia and Khaldæa.

From such a site these boundless, almost level tracts, would stretch before the eye far away beyond the scope of vision—a sea of land with no limits but the natural horizon.



In this great extent, once teeming with an industrious population, intersected by numerous canals, and covered with cities, towns, and villages, and still dotted with huge mounds, relics of past ages, and towers and temples, like beacons on an ocean of land, the eye would even still detect the distant towers of Accad and Borsippa, the cities at the head and along the course of the first derivatives from the Great River, perchance even the mounds of Babylon, the minarets and domes of Baghdad, the colossal arch of Ctesiphon, and in the far off horizon the giant mounds of Erech, and of 'Ur of the Khaldees,' for nothing but the spherical shape of the earth, or want of power in the eye, could obstruct, in a region of clear skies and pellucid horizons, a far seeking vision.

At the very least, and under the most untoward circumstances, the hum of men would make itself almost audible from cities of renown—Sippahara and Sura—immediately at the foot of the hills; the great Wall of Semiramis would lie like a girdle upon the flanks of Median or Mesopotamian territory, the lofty tower of the Biblical Accad would be plainly discerned, while the river itself—the mighty Euphrates—would be all the time flowing beneath the very shadow of temple and throne; exulting at its proud approach to the land of brazen gates, of hanging gardens, of gilded palaces and lofty towers, and where its azure bosom would be fretted and chequered by lights of naphtha and bitumen like the starry heavens.

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